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Stony Brook, N.Y.

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J. C. Massee

Boston.

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August 1925









**CONFLICT AND CONQUEST  
IN HOLINESS**

WORKS BY  
**J. C. MASSEE, D.D.**

*Pastor Tremont Temple, Boston*

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# Conflict and Conquest in Holiness

By

J. C. MASSEE, D. D.

*Pastor, Tremont Temple Baptist Church, Boston*

*Author of "The Gospel in the Ten Commandments," etc.*



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*To My Friends:*

*"Sans peur et sans reproche"*

*Curtis Lee Laws*

*Floyd H. Adams*

*Frank M. Goodchild*

*Loyal in devotion to Christ,*

*Courageous in conflict,*

*Self-emptying in service,*

*Steadfast under trial,*

*Dependable in fellowship.*



## FOREWORD

**E**XPOSITION of Scripture illuminated by illustrations from life furnishes the best possible means of making modern application to eternal principles of truth. That Gospel is always dynamic which searches out the consciences of men, makes practical the demands of truth, and brings to realization the presence and the holiness of God.

Certain types and symbols of the Old Testament have long been fruitful sources of exposition and interpretation of truth. There is also a *symbolism of experience* in the Old Testament which furnishes the richest vein of golden treasure for the preacher and teacher of the Christian Gospel. It was with this thought in mind that the following messages were presented to my people, to whom through them God was graciously pleased to bring great blessing. During the progress of their delivery, a genuine revival was produced, manifest in conversation, consecration to definite Christian service, reconciliation of those estranged, and reclamation and reconsecration of backsliders, an unusual generosity in gifts, and a tremendously quickened spiritual consciousness on the part of the whole church.

God is here. Before Him all sin is set in judgment. With Him all difficulties disappear. From Him all strength and courage in action must be drawn. To Him all credit and praise must be given. With Him a blessed companionship may be constantly maintained. For Him a living testimony should be borne; and from Him blessed rewards are constantly received by those who, like Joshua, go forth to the daily task, God-appointed, in the simple assurance of the truth and reality of the promise given to him and to Israel upon their entrance into Canaan:

“As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

Be strong and of a good courage.

Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee; turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.

This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein; for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed; for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.”

To those who may read these messages may there come a larger blessing even than that which attended those who heard them.

J. C. M.

TREMONT TEMPLE

BOSTON, MASS.



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# I

## CONQUEST

*“Now it came to pass after the death of Moses the servant of Jehovah, that Jehovah spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’ minister, saying, Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, \* \* \* This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not affrighted, neither be thou dismayed: for Jehovah thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.”—JOSHUA 1:1-2, 8-9.*

**B**EARING in mind one of the authoritative statements of later Scripture, “Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for *instruction* which is in righteousness,” we may turn to an experimental exposition of this Scripture with anticipations of great profit. The margin of the Revised Version indicates that the word *instruction* quoted in the text above may also be translated “discipline.” The use of Scripture is often found in the discipline under which it brings men. The history of God’s dealing with His people in ancient days is the prophecy of

God's methods with His people in all days. The Scriptures are filled with experiences of saints which are typical and symbolic. The experiences of the Israelites are none the less illustrative because they are historical. The peculiar people were set apart that God might through them demonstrate His ways with men as well as to make known His will for men. There is in God no variableness, neither shadow that is cast by turning. When men approach God from the same angle He is always found to be the same. Variations in His self-expression are due to the variableness of man's attitude. To the froward, He shows Himself froward; to the humble, He displays Himself in mercy.

God always deals with His people according to certain definite principles. The recognition of His sovereignty guarantees the employment of His omnipotence. God is always in the shadows guiding His people when their hearts are obedient to His Presence. The sculptor who placed the figure of the Christ behind Phillips Brooks with hand upon his shoulder, in the famous monument at the entrance to Trinity Church, Boston, had caught a conception of that which was true, not alone in the life of the great preacher, but is equally true in the lives of all God's people. Gerald Stanley Lee once wrote a most entrancing book which he called "The Shadow Christ." In it he tracks the Master through all the Old Testa-

ment Scripture and reveals the fact that all Scripture is interpreted aright only within the Presence and through the Person of this matchless One. But the Shadow Christ is a fact not alone in Scripture but in the experience of God's people everywhere and always. This is the thing I would make plain and write with indelible pen upon the very scroll of life's book. When Paul came to write his great exposition of the experience of the wilderness, he declared of Israel: "They all drank of the rock which followed them, and that rock was Christ."

If God's people had eyes to discern that inheritance which is their surest possession, they would know that always when life's crises are most acute, when life's experiences are darkest, the luminous presence of the Invisible One shines most brightly and clearly. When light falls upon the path and the goings of life's journeys are all pleasant, He may withdraw Himself into the shadows. It is comforting to know that He manifests Himself according to our need. His arm is ready for us to lean upon in the hard places. When our souls are being tried with the dangers of the untried way, He is within calling distance. This assurance is voiced on every page of the living Word. "As I have been with my servants of old, so will I be with thee."

All human experiences are but duplications of those which have gone before. When our hearts



must sound the depths of sorrow; when our spirits soar to the heights of ecstasy; when we must tread the monotony of the daily treadmill of routine; in every experience and circumstance under which our soul cries out for God, He is there. So if I would know what God thinks and how He would have me act now, I have but to turn the pages of His record here in the Book and see what He thought and how He wished men to act under similar circumstances. "Every Scripture being inspired is profitable for discipline." When I find God walking in the shadows with those Old Testament saints through life's trying experiences, I may be very sure that the God who changes not, that the Christ who is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, has not lost step with men who trust and are tried; with men who hold on to God even while they stumble, and "stretch out their necks" in anticipation of His coming. It has been written many times of old: "Then they cried unto Him in their trouble and He delivered them out of all their distresses." That is like God. He delights to reveal Himself. But like the magnet to the metal, His power is only revealed to those lives that respond to His power. Of this I am perfectly assured, out of both Scripture and experience, that God is always within reach, and that He always rewards expectant faith by the demonstration of His presence and His power.

This is the assurance which the First Chapter of Joshua brings with greatly renewed emphasis as we read it again and yet again, "Be strong and of good courage," "I will be with thee: I will not leave thee, nor forsake thee," "Only be strong and very courageous to observe to do according to all the law, \* \* \* turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest have good success whithersoever thou goest." "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not affrighted, neither be thou dismayed: for Jehovah, thy God, is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

#### THE SETTING

At a great crisis, a great people are called upon to change leaders. God buries Moses, substitutes Joshua, and commands the people to go forward. This procedure is against all human philosophy and is utterly beyond all human understanding. Moses had led them forty years. The demonstration of the presence of God with him had put the hearts of the people in his hand. Surely he, if any, was the man to lead them forward to the consummation of all their desires, the realization of their heavenly anticipations. Could they ever gain Canaan without Moses? Had they known it, they could never have gained Canaan with Moses! So God buries Moses in order that Israel, long depending on Moses, and unable yet to depend

upon Joshua, the new leader, may realize their dependence upon God. The urgency of that necessity which compels them to go forward will become the urgency of a new necessity to lean hard upon the mighty arm of God. They cannot walk any other way, they must go forward. They must learn, and there is no better place for the lesson than now that "it is not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord." The way will not be made clear to them by the outriders of an army. They will not win a passage into the promised land by building pontoons across murky Jordan. The walled cities promised to them by God at the other side of Jordan will not fall to them as a result of the military prowess of their armed hosts. Not by swords of steel, but by that Sword which is the Word of God will they win through. They must learn that now. If they will not go forward without Moses, they are unable to go forward at all.

#### MOSES IS DEAD

Perhaps no sadder dirge ever fell upon the ears of a nation than those words: "Moses, my servant, is dead." God had buried him on lonely Nebo. Satan had made a great contest for the possession of his body and Michael had there had it out with him. But Moses is dead! In the light of that fact, we stop to sum up the story of his life. No human words are adequate to eulogize Moses. The

greatness of his character!—great in his humility, greater still in his faith. With a patience equal to that of Job and a steadfastness that consented to live on a cross for forty years, he looms above the level horizon of human life like some mighty peak of the Himalayas. To see life from the height of Moses' character is like viewing the sunrise over the plains from the top of the world. We marvel less at the greatness of his work because of the contemplated glory of his character. Always man does what he does because he is what he is. Great men achieve greatly, because they are great. Lasting memorials are not written in sand, but are wrought in iron and chiseled in stone. The facets of life's diamonds of experience are prepared for the scintillating light of glory only as that experience meets a character of great powers of endurance, able to grind down the rough into the smooth and make a highway of achievements out of difficulties. Moses was great in himself and, therefore, great in his achievements. It is fitting that the fame of his name should be commensurate with the greatness of his character and his work. Every page of history from his time on has had his name graven on it. The laws he wrote at the instigation of his God have become the foundation of all law, moral and civil, among all the civilized peoples of the world. He was great enough for history not to make him a god, yet to reverence his name as a man and to accept

his writings as the incarnation of truth. A lesser man would have been enshrined as a god and despised as a teacher. Not Moses. His memory has lingered through the centuries like a fragrance. His shadow has lengthened to cover more than three millenniums and already projects itself forward through those pages that are yet to be written in the history of God's people in the earth. What more can be said?

But Moses is dead. His leadership is done. That is the point, as we come to that startling history which bears Joshua's name. Enshrine his memory! Cherish his name if they must and as they will. Israel is commanded of God to look elsewhere for leadership. He does not even permit them to know the whereabouts of the grave of Moses lest they make it a shrine and be content to pitch their tents about it as sacred ground from which to mourn the glory of departed greatness. Moses is dead! Now, therefore, arise, go over this Jordan!

#### MOSES FAILED

As one reviews the history of Israel under the leadership of Moses, he cannot but be impressed with the fact that Moses' leading failed. Israel moved, indeed, but he did not go anywhere. The people got nowhere. There was motion without progress. He brought them out of Egypt but he did not bring them into Canaan. It is true that



he got them up to Kadesh Barnea. God permitted them a glimpse into the Promised Land, but Moses did not know how to select his spies. So ten of the twelve he sent forward into the land brought an evil report of the land and of Israel's ability to go in at the word of God. That was Moses' fault. Once the meekest man asserted himself in such a way against God, that He found it impossible to use him. Long before they came to the final opportunity to enter Canaan, it was known that Moses could not lead them in. Strange as it may seem in the face of constant repetition of miracles, in the presence of marvels of God's doings that have not ceased to be a source of wonder and admiration for thirty centuries under the leadership of Moses, Israel had balked at every barrier and stumbled over every hurdle. So far as his great life ambition is concerned, Moses died a defeated and a disappointed man. If the exodus was but a prelude to the settlement of the nation, then Moses laid down his task before it was done.

Of course, this is written from a purely human point of view. The purpose of God in Moses was complete. He was capable and efficient for a part of the task, not for all of it. So the nation had now to learn the lesson at the beginning of the final stage of his journey, that greatness and security built only upon human leadership is precarious in the extreme. Permanent greatness for any people is never reached until the people them-

selves have been brought to an ability to take moral initiative and a constant willingness to assume moral responsibility. Moses must ever abide in defeat unless the people he has led consent to follow the leadership of his successor in office. Life's race is always run in relays. This is equally true of the individual and of the community. The child is father to the man. The future is born from the womb of the present. The success of every man's work depends ultimately upon his successor. Moses realized this and had taken much pains therefore for many years to train his Joshua. As later Elijah will have his Elisha, Paul his Timothy, and Peter his Mark. Even the Master of all men took the risk of trusting the continuance of His work to the hands of men who should come after Him, saying: "I have given to you the keys of the Kingdom," "As my Father has sent me, even so send I you." When the final scroll of history is written and the great song at the climax of the triumph of God in the earth is being sung, prophecy tells us that it will be a song of Moses and the Lamb. This links in unbroken continuity the labors of all those who from Moses to Christ have seen with an eye of faith and wrought with a hand of devotion.

#### JOSHUA IS APPOINTED

It is marvelous how God upsets all the wisdom of this world. One of the saw sophisms current

to-day is this attributed to Lincoln: "Never swap horses in the middle of the stream." But that is exactly what God constantly does. He did it with Lincoln. It has never appeared to us that the death of Lincoln was anything but a calamity. Yet in the providence of God, it is entirely possible that the reconstruction of the national life after the Civil War could not have been accomplished with Lincoln alive. So He did with Moses. At the very hour of the realization of His purposes, He buries Moses and appoints Joshua in his stead. An untried leader for an untried way! After all, men learn God's ways only from walking with God in the dark! The early church with a great show of prayer and piety appointed Matthias to take the place of Judas and recorded his name among the apostles. But God lets him fall into oblivion and calmly appoints His own successor to Judas in the person of the apostle Paul. There is a certain church in America which was bereft of the leadership of the man who was its builder and about whose life its great dreams seemed to be materializing. They chose three times from the greatest in the land to be the successors of the departed pastor. Finally when all three of the great men had failed, conspicuously failed, when the work had all but ceased to function, when progress had fully ceased and there seemed no hope of recovery, God pointed out to them by the Holy Spirit that His man for the place

was a young assistant of the former pastor who had never had pastoral experience save in a brief career as an assistant. The story of the succeeding years is written largely in success. A crushing debt has been lifted. Scattered congregations have rallied. Multitudes of souls have been saved and the work of God goes forward with this pastoral *Joshua* leading on.

Of course, it is right to be warned as Joshua was warned. Israel had not passed this way before. Success will not depend upon the leader except as the leader is led by the Spirit of the living God. All who try the untried way with Joshua substituting for Moses must know that they will be called upon to discard the lamp of experience for light upon the path of the future. As they cross into Canaan they must leave behind every experience, every familiar landmark, every confidence of the past. The program of God for His people is a program of faith. That may mean little as an abstraction, but in Joshua we see it set down in concrete form. The manna which they had gathered every morning for forty years suddenly ceased. Provision of tents is denied for dwellings. Food in the wilderness comes down from Heaven, the reward of faith. Food for the land comes up from the ground as the reward of diligent labour under the blessings of the same God. Clothes lasting forty years will fall apart now. Spinning wheels and looms will spring into

existence lest an idle people fall into vice. The daily path will no longer be found for them by the pillar of cloud or of fire. The tent of meeting will be in the midst and they must seek the face of Jehovah if they would know His will. Not again will sea or river open for them. They must learn to build bridges and construct pontoons if they would cross turbulent waters. Every precedent of the past is to give place to the military organization of the future and its purpose. Such an hour is the most testing for a nation, church, or individual. God's ultimate test of your faith lies in His demand that you turn your back upon the past and your face to the future and "*forgetting the things which are behind and stretching forward to the things which are before, press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*"

#### JOSHUA IS GOD'S MAN

God appointed Joshua! He is not the elective choice of a democratic people. He is the appointee of a sovereign God. Inferior to Moses? Yes, as men estimate comparisons. Great chiefly because Moses' successor? Granted! But God chose him, and he has this to his credit that he was great enough to be obedient and loyal from the beginning to the end. He never swerved in his loyalty to God. It is true he made mistakes—one serious one at least—but we must remem-

ber always that the task which Moses could not accomplish God completed through Joshua. It has been said that Oliver Cromwell's life and labours centered around the very thing which made Joshua great, expressed in Paul's amazing statement: "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." No Joshua needs to fear succession in office to any Moses, provided he be assured that his succession is of God's appointment. Elisha with the mantle of Elijah in his hands, though he must walk the way of the earth while his Elijah soars in a chariot of fire into Heaven, may well smite the waters of his difficulties with the challenge, "Where is the God of Elijah?". With that faith, rivers divide, barriers crumble, difficulties vanish and victory approaches always upon the swift feet of certainty.

#### FACING CANAAN

Canaan is a land of settlement and service. Therefore a land of conflict and conquest. In this it is type and symbol of our spiritual conflict and conquest. The Book of Joshua centers around two great words—*Conquest* and *Confidence*. Conquest because our God is a man of war!

"The Son of God goes forth to war,  
A kingly crown to gain;  
His blood-red banner streams afar:  
Who follows in His train?  
Who best can drink His cup of woe,  
Triumphant over pain;

Who patient bears His cross below,  
He follows in His train.

\* \* \* \* \*

A noble army, men and boys,  
The matron and the maid,  
Around the Saviour's throne rejoice,  
In robes of light arrayed;  
They climbed the steep ascent of heaven  
Thro' peril, toil and pain:  
O God, to us may grace be given,  
To follow in their train."

#### CONFIDENCE!

How many times is the injunction repeated to Joshua: "Be strong and of a good courage." Multitudes of God's people have learned that "Faith is the victory which overcomes the world." One man and God always make a majority. He who fights under the banner of Jehovah wins even in defeat and succeeds even in failure.

#### THE UNCHANGING FACT

One fact remains ever unchanged. God is with them! He promises to be with them in the future as He had been in the past. He speaks to Joshua whom He chose as He had spoken to Moses, His servant. The Book of the Law giving perfect revelation of His will is in their hands. But far better than that, He Himself is with them and the promise which He made to Moses, "My presence shall go with you," He will fulfill to Joshua. And He will give them rest.



Christians may well remember also the word of promise attached to the Great Commission, "I am with thee all the days even unto the end of the age."

One dare not close such a meditation without serious question. Are we who live to-day and carry on God's work willing to face the future and go forward? Dare we hold this day as God's day with us and our day for Him? We stand like Joshua upon the threshold of the great adventure. How great shall we make it? Have we faith enough to lengthen the cords and strengthen the stakes? Dare we climb high enough to broaden the rim of our horizon? Have we found the heavenly vision sufficiently clear to let it dominate our thinking as well as our acting for all the years to come? Someone is quoted as having said recently: "The greatest force in the world is an idea whose hour has come." I give you then this idea—God is with us. Let us make this His hour.

## II

### THE CONSECRATION OF COURAGE

*"Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not affrighted, neither be thou dismayed: for Jehovah thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."*—  
JOSHUA 1:9.

TOO much cannot be made of the fact that there is a constant analogy between the historic experience of God's people and the current experience of His saints. What happened to Joshua and Israel facing their entrance into the Promised Land is constantly happening to those who follow their Lord in faith to-day, as they face open doors of opportunity and new crises in the enlargement of their spiritual experiences of commitment to and service for their Lord. God's people then faced unprecedented tasks and unprecedented difficulties, real and imaginary. Years of preparation behind them, they had come at last to the place where preparation must be translated into practice, where faith must vision itself in service, where anticipation must issue in realization.

Moses is dead. Joshua has been appointed leader. The wilderness way with its miraculous provisions and its familiar experiences of provi-

dence lies behind. A new, untried way lies immediately before them. Joshua is a cautious leader. He has sent his spies and they have returned with their report. One is not sure from reading the record but that their report was made up before they went into the land. It must be remembered that Joshua who commands now instead of Moses had been one of the two with Caleb forty years before, who spied out this land and returned with a good report. While the twelve spies of Moses went through the land and made up a report from personal observation, and discovered nothing of the attitude of the people of the land toward the proposed invasion of the land of Israel; the two spies of Joshua went directly to the home of Rahab and lay there. The only new thing they discovered was the melted hearts of the people, because of Jehovah the God of Israel. The stage was all set for their report, and their report was perfectly timed for the event—the advance by Israel into Canaan. Be that as it may, the command of God to go forward is imperative and the command from God to move forward means always a crisis in the experience of His people, for it has been ordained of God that His people walk by faith, not by sight.

#### THE UNPRECEDENTED TASK

The task for Joshua and Israel is the conquest of a land and the establishment therein of a Holy

people as a testimony for God to all the world. It must ever be remembered that God's reason for establishing Israel in the land of the nations, lies in the fact that He has ordained them to be a holy priesthood. The nations are to learn of Jehovah through Israel. Their theocratic government is to be at once an example and a challenge to all nations. Their method of life is to be an exemplification of that heavenly wisdom which they learned from Him who makes the tent of meeting the capital of their national life and of their personal life as well.

They have come to the hour of destiny. God's purposes are ripening fast. His movements are sometimes slow to short-sighted men with their brief span of hastening years, but His movements are certain, and measured by the tape-line of eternity rather than by the yardstick of time, they hasten on. Scripture has already unfolded the fulfillment of God's purposes in three of the seven great dispensations. He had appointed a chosen seed, ordained a chosen race, called a chosen family, covenanted for a chosen land and promised for the future a chosen nation, a selected tribe and an appointed kingdom—or dynasty. Seth was the chosen seed; Shem the chosen race; Abraham the chosen family; Canaan the chosen land; Israel the promised nation; Judah the selected tribe; and the house and throne of David the appointed dynasty.

It will be observed that in these seven, the chosen land occupies the middle place. It was promised in perpetuity to Abraham as an inheritance for him and his seed. Its boundaries are fixed in Genesis 15:18. He confirms that grant now to Joshua and Israel. The three dispensations of promise lie behind in fulfillment. The three dispensations of prophecy lie before in anticipation. It will be observed that the chosen land is essential to the elect nation. There must be a place of settlement. Israel must have a "local habitation and a name." They have come to the place then of the completion of the last step and the initiation of the next step in the providence, purpose, and program of God. They must go in to possess this land if they are to be borne along on the current of God's purpose, unhindered by any cross-currents of worldliness and sin.

We who look back, marvel at the definiteness and the setting of this whole wondrous transaction. Here joins the streams of history and prophecy, and their confluence makes both crisis and destiny for a people.

The Church and its leaders, by direct analogy, if one may read the signs of the times and interpret the spirit of the age, to-day stand at the crisis of the world's religious history. We have not chosen this hour nor selected the line of spiritual battle with which we are certainly confronted in the world. Yet we have come to the place where

Christian faith and the Christian church can no longer consent to be on the defensive. We dare not permit another to choose our battle-ground. Perhaps the one imperative of this hour for the Christian Church is that it assume an aggressive offensive, in the propagation of its faith. Our spiritual liberties lay upon us spiritual responsibility to possess a position for a holy people in whom the Holy Spirit shall preserve and continue to voice the testimony of Jesus. We dare not tarry this side of Jordan. We cannot go back to the wilderness way of our aimless wanderings. We can no longer live on the provisions of the past. We must cross over and fight or remain and perish!

#### UNPRECEDENTED DIFFICULTIES

Their difficulties were all but innumerable and insuperable. For Israel they were a river without a bridge and without ferries; walled cities; armed enemies; untried roads; the necessity for a complete reconstruction of their organization at the beginning of their movement. But their chiefest difficulty lay in this—that they were required to move forward solely for God's reason, the warfare of holiness against sin. And also they must go forward in entire dependence upon the presence and power of God in their conflict. Therein and thereunder alone lay their hope of victory.

## FOR US

Unprecedented difficulties confront the Christian Church to-day in the oppositions of the unholy triple alliance of organized materialism, intellectualism, and occultism, in a setting of religious liberalism with their forces organized under the tutelage of the philosophy of evolution, the most pagan philosophy the world has ever known. The Church is confronted with the fact that this triple alliance of this world's philosophies has taken over the citadels of our schools, has seduced our preachers to become their propagandists, has despoiled us of our public press as manifested in papers, periodicals and books, and has succeeded by the sheer force of a Christless public opinion in demoralizing the morale of the Christian forces. The Twentieth Century Church is confronted with an organized paganism more perfect in its expression and its organization even than that which the First Century Church faced in imperial Rome. Every force and factor of a Christless world and a Godless age are against us. We must fight or die! There is no place in this land where the Christian individual or the Christian Church can be passive and live. Every student is challenged as to his faith. Every business man, if he maintains Christian standards, must give a reason for the hope that is in him. Every preacher loyal to the Gospel of Christ suffers a living martyrdom.



The first century commission of Christ to those who should be endued with the power of the Holy Spirit to become His witnesses rightly translated reads: "Ye shall become my martyrs, in Jerusalem, in Judea, in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the world." The same thing is finding a new urgency and a new expression in the lives of those who maintain the faith of Christ in the world to-day. When Christ said: "I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," He thrust a sword into the hand of the Church. He forever forbade a passive attitude for her. For the gates of hell are to be assailed by the Church of Christ and by the power of the Word of the Living God. The gates of hell, the forces of evil, under assault, from the lives and lips of faithful men are to be beaten down, broken off and destroyed.

Dare we commit ourselves to the possession, the purpose, and the program of God? How closely the challenge of Joshua and Israel parallels the challenge of those who in this day serve their God and preserve the integrity of their faith. Like Joshua and Israel, the Church is now challenged to take possession of the stage for Jehovah's display of Himself in the earth. There is a warfare, there is a battle, upon which may hinge the future of the whole Christian Church. The greatest difficulty with which we are faced, perhaps, lies in the demand of God that we realize His reason for our

conflict, in the perpetuation by the Church of the testimony of Jesus; and in His demand that we carry forward the fight solely in dependence upon the Spirit of the Living God and by the employment of His weapons of warfare.

We face such an hour as came to Wesley when Christian England had become deistic in fact, while still clinging to the nomenclature of Christianity. We face such an hour as came to William Carey when the ingrowing process of the Christian Church had spoiled it of its fidelity, robbed it of its devotion and plundered it of its power. We face such a day as the Welsh Church faced when for two years God tried in various pulpits and chapels to break through in the great revival which finally found expression when Evan Roberts and his band of sixteen friends yielded themselves without reservation to the possession, the purpose and the program of God. He is saying to us as He said to the Early Church, if we have ears to hear Him: "Behold, I have set before thee a door opened."—Rev. 3: 8. Dare we enter it?

One does not wonder at the dismay and the fear which must have swept through Joshua, the untried leader, with a people too well known, facing the untried way that led first through an impassable river on to immediate contact with impossible difficulties as measured in terms of human experience.

## REASONS FOR HIS FEAR

We cannot but believe that Joshua was moved by altogether human conditions in his reaction to the constant demand of God that he and Israel proceed along the path of those difficulties up to Jordan, the passage through which had not yet been made plain. Joshua must have looked upon the people whom he had to lead. Is his force, his organization, his fighting contingent, his equipment, sufficient? Is the character of these people whom he leads such as to warrant his trust in the outcome of their venture? Every man fit for leadership must know both the treacherous quality as well as the essential loyalty of the people whom he leads. Perhaps the most perfect statement of this fact lies in the words John inserts as an interpretation of the acts and attitude of the Lord Jesus, "But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of men; for he knew what was in man."—John 2:23. Joshua must have known these people rather thoroughly. Remember, he had been Moses' servant. They are canonizing Moses now, yet he could not but recall the day when these same people had threatened to stone Moses; nor the many occasions upon which they had challenged his authority; nor that tragic hour, twice repeated, when they provoked him to wrath and to sin by their folly and their murmurings.

It was they who had occasioned his wrath on the day when he returned from the Mount of Vision and cast down the tables of stone on which the finger of God had traced the law. It was they who had by their repeated murmurings incited him to disobedience on the day when in self-assertion of pride he stood upon Horeb and smote the rock with his rod when God commanded him only to speak to it in the Name of the Lord. Joshua knew that these were the children of a generation who had perished in the wilderness because of their stubbornness and self-will and lust after the flesh pots of Egypt. The voice of Stephen in rebuke centuries later might have been spoken then by Joshua: "Ye do always resist the Holy Spirit." Joshua must have known that among the people he must lead were some who distrusted him, some who would resist him, some who would discredit him, some who would seek to substitute their plans for his, and that while the vast majority of them would be loyal and devoted they would never catch his vision and would never realize either his relation or theirs to God and to the world. He must have had a fearful misgiving that, when they came into the land, in stubborn disobedience to the heavenly command, they would make compromise with the nations and that for four hundred years they would never fully possess the land. In other words, he must have seen that he was venturing upon an enduring strug-

gle in which perils, toils and pains would be his constant and daily portion. But being such as he was, and the people such as they were, God had bound them together and was bidding them go forward.

#### FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN

How the unknown grips the heart of man. Fear arises always out of the unexplained. The mysteries of the powers of nature; forces of the universe; the lightning; the thunder; the torrents of rain; the swollen stream; the earth rocked by an earthquake; the sun eclipsed in heaven; the primeval forests with their lurking shadows; the unknown causes of disastrous epidemics; the perilous power of pestilence. Every unknown fact and factor of the struggle which lay before, must have arisen to daunt his spirit and fill his heart with dismay. We are perfectly familiar with the terror of the unknown. Laughter on a baby's lips, happy in play at his mother's knee, dies away at the approach of a stranger and he clings in timidity and fear to her skirts. We all know the terror with which we approach death and yet the physicians and surgeons who have understanding of these matters tell us that there is no pain in dissolution. There are no physical pangs in death. Why do we dread the passage save that it is an adventure into the unknown? One well recalls the hour of taking passage first upon an oceanic steamer.

How the heart sank then! The spirit was filled with anxiety at the unknown dangers of the deep, the trusting of oneself to an element treacherous because unknown. All these face every servant of God at every command to enter upon the unwonted strife, to walk in the unaccustomed way.

#### FEAR SPRINGS FROM THE UNTRIED

They had not yet matched their strength against their enemies. There were giants in the land! We may imagine some of their names—"What if," "Suppose," "They are too many," "I am afraid." It is to be supposed from one's own experience that every Christian, every servant of God, who has ever walked the highway of life has seen lions in the way. The timid ones who turn back have never discovered that the lions were chained just beyond the reach of their prey. I am quite sure that I have in my house timber enough to build a bridge around the world, crossing all its rivers, its mountains and its plains, and that every stick of that timber has been taken out of bridges which we crossed before we came to them and did not need to use when we reached them.

#### THE FEAR OF THE UNSEEN AND THE UNREAL

The unseen and the unreal are twins. Imagination makes their name legion and their presence powerful and terrible. We do not see them, it is true, but we imagine them. They are there. And

though truly without existence, they are terribly real. Peter did very well on the stormy sea, walking on the water, until he saw the wind. But no man ever saw the wind in reality, not even Peter, unless Satan gave him vision. He saw with the eyes of his imagination. He ceased to look up and began to look down. His outlook was not determined by his uplook.

What a fearful monster is the dark. Every corner is a lurking place for an enemy. Every sound is a shout of doom. Every motion presages a menace. One can almost hear that group of anxious spies, whom Moses had sent, saying with bated breath: "The inhabitants of the land are giants and we are as grasshoppers in their sight, and in our own estimation."

But in spite of the terror of all these and other forces, the unknown, the untried and the unreal, the command of God is "Go forward." Oh, yes, of course they ran the risk of losing all with the human possibility of failure and its consequent discredit. They have burned their bridges behind them. They, like Cortez in Mexico centuries later, dared to invade the land without ships on which to take passage in the event of disaster. They may perish in the waging of their warfare.

It is perfectly certain, however, that if Joshua and Israel wait on the banks of Jordan until the way of conflict surrenders the weapons of all its dangers and difficulties, their graves have already



been digged, their cause is already defeated and themselves already doomed. Further, again, there is an imperative command, "Go forward." Cross this Jordan. Take this land filled with dangers and giants and difficulties!

"BE STRONG"

The effect of the command, "Be strong," is "*Make yourselves strong.*" The method is perfectly simple. Tie in with God. Put yourselves in proper connection with the source of all strength. Get hold of the lesson that God taught Abraham when He said to him in Genesis 15:1, "I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward."

"AND BE OF A GOOD COURAGE"

Courage is fortitude. It is a holy boldness to do. Courage is born of conviction. Courage is not fearlessness—that is mere bravery. Courage is holy disregard of fear, circumstances and consequences for righteousness' sake. Courage took hold of the heart of that soldier who with quaking heart and trembling knees, facing his first battle, said to his knees: "Yes, that is right, tremble! You would tremble for something if you knew where I was going to take you directly."

Courage such as Joshua needed, such as we need to-day, is found in necessity. That is the courage which every human being must find when he goes to the hospital and to the table of the surgeon for

an operation. When through the anesthetic he embraces death that he may defeat death. This thing must be done. Duty demands it. Therefore, go forward!

Ours is a God-appointed mission. We dare not give over. We dare not let go. We dare not hesitate nor stop. Dr. Joseph Clark, on the shores of Africa seeking to land from a small boat, was confronted by a tribe of wild cannibals brandishing their knives and spears in the air, hailing his coming with defiant and bloody glee. His comrades in the boat urged him not to land. But in the holy confidence that his God had sent him with a message to these very men, he drove his boat straight up to the beach, stepped out upon the sand, and was immediately surrounded by the cannibal tribesmen. But in the midst of them he lifted up his Book, succeeded in gaining their attention, told his message, won their confidence, stayed their purpose, began a ministry which resulted in their conversion to Christ and in their transformation as a people. That was courage born of the necessity of a conviction that he traveled under a safe conduct from God because of the commission carried from God.

Courage was also found in a conscious knowledge of their resources. They had with them the law, the Word of God. They had with them the consciences of the men of the land as revealed in the word of Rahab to the two spies: "Our hearts

have melted within us because we have heard of the presence and the power of Jehovah, your God." They had the promise of God and His wonder-working power.

We as Christians add to all the resources they had, the presence and indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and the great cloud of witnesses who through all the centuries have by faith wrought miracles, raised their dead from the grave, suffered persecution, endured hardships, fought battles, won victories and justified the ways of God among men. When Elisha by prayer opened the eyes of his servant he discovered the presence of that host, more with them than against them, he put an army at his back and munitions of war in his hands and victory upon his banner. More are they who are with us to-day than they who are against us, when in obedience to the heavenly mandate we go forward to possess the land in His Name.

#### COURAGE IN THE CONFIDENCE OF COMPANIONSHIP

Over and over again God said to Joshua: "I will be with thee. As I was with Moses, I will be with thee. I am giving thee the confidence of the people. I will give thee good success." He has been saying that same thing to His people through the centuries. He is saying it to them to-day. Unmistakable blessings and successes attend those who dare to go forward in any and all circumstances at the command of their Lord.

David experienced it at a far later date than Joshua when he wrote: "I have set the Lord always before me. Because the Lord is at my right hand, I shall never be moved." Judson experienced it when in answer to a letter from the American Board, asking him "What are the prospects in Burma?", he wrote: "The prospects are as bright as the promises of God." So in personal experience always and everywhere, and in public duties and service, we may always face the task and the difficulties with holy confidence, saying: "The Lord is my helper. Of whom shall I be afraid?" Did not our Master in giving His Church her great Commission add: "Lo, I am with you all the days." Let us move on in this confidence.

"What things shall happen on the morrow  
 Thou kindly hidest from our gaze,  
 But tellest us in joy or sorrow,  
 Lo, I am with thee all the days.

When round our heads the tempest rages  
 And sink our feet in miry ways  
 Thy voice comes floating down the ages,  
 Lo, I am with thee all the days.

O Thou who art our life and meetness,  
 No task shall daunt us or amaze,  
 Hearing Thy voice of power and sweetness,  
 Lo, I am with thee all the days."

### III

## THE SCARLET WOMAN

*"And Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men as spies secretly, saying, Go view the land, and Jericho. And they went, and came into the house of a harlot whose name was Rahab, and lay there. \* \* \* And she sent them away, and they departed: and she bound the scarlet line in the window. And they went, and came unto the mountain, and abode there three days, until the pursuers were returned: and the pursuers sought them throughout all the way, but found them not. Then the two men returned, and descended from the mountain, and passed over, and came to Joshua the son of Nun; and they told him all that had befallen them. And they said unto Joshua, Truly, Jehovah hath delivered into our hands all the land; and moreover all the inhabitants of the land do melt away before us."—*  
JOSHUA 2:1, 21-24.

THE second stage in the progress of Israel toward Canaan after God had given His command for their advance under Joshua presents two notable events, one of them at least of far-reaching and historic importance. These two events were the sending of the two spies and the contact with the scarlet woman—Rahab.

#### THE TWO SPIES

Joshua was not only a war-tried and efficient military man, but he was a prudent counsellor, a wise and cautious leader. There is just a sus-

picion that his caution sometimes took on the aspect of doubt, so that more than once God had to remind him to make his heart strong and to be of good courage. The men whose homes were settled on the east side of the Jordan when agreeing to fulfill their contract for the war of conquest on the west Jordan, felt it incumbent upon them to encourage Joshua to be strong and of a good courage. They further strengthened his hands by a promise themselves to care for any sedition which might arise in the camp. So it is perhaps perfectly natural that we should find after Joshua assumes the leadership and received the command of God, that he should pause long enough to send out two spies into the promised land that they might bring back a report of encouragement and cheer.

But Joshua as a leader was as canny as he was cautious. There is no small significance in the fact that he sent only two spies. He himself had been one of twelve spies representing the twelve tribes who at the direction of Moses forty years before had gone into Canaan. Their selection was a triumph of diplomacy. Moses selected them for their high position in the tribes. Every one of them was a prince. But, unfortunately, royal office does not always hinge upon royal character. And Joshua must have brought through all the intervening years the keenness of his own disappointment, and that of Caleb, when of the twelve only

two brought back a favourable report. So when he came to send spies, he sent only two. Without doubt those two were carefully selected by him for their courage, their faithful devotion, their royal optimism, and undaunted and unquestioning faith in the promise, the presence and the power of God. As one reads the story of their sending and return, and catches the spirit of their report upon their return, he is half convinced that in all probability Joshua had prepared the report even before they were sent out. He knew what he wanted and he knew how to get it.

The quality in action is determined always by two things. First by the relations of the actor and second by the motive behind the action. The man who looks for encouragement toward a certain course of action is as far removed from him who looks for difficulties in that course of action, as east is removed from west. The one has already achieved, the other is already doomed to failure. There is a divine call to optimism in the discharge of duty. God and one man are always a majority. One man and God shall put a thousand to flight, and two men with God shall easily rout ten thousand. The confidence of faith is, "I can do all things through Him who strengtheneth me." Faith invariably translates itself first into purpose and then into practice. It will be remembered that both Moses and Joshua sent spies into Canaan while Israel waited on its borders. Both



Moses and Joshua, when the men they sent to spy out the land, had the promise of God for its possession. Certainly Moses did not trust the promise of Jehovah less than did Joshua. It appears, however, that the spies sent by Moses interpreted their mission to be to see *if* the land could be taken. Those sent by Joshua interpreted their mission to be to see *how* the land could be taken. The reports of the two groups of spies are tremendously interesting, therefore, in comparison and in contrast.

Here is the report of the spies sent out by Moses:

“And they returned from spying out the land at the end of forty days. And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land.

And they told him, and said, We came into the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it.

*Howbeit* the people that dwell in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified, and very great; and moreover we saw the children of Anak there.

Amalek dwelleth in the land of the South; and the Hittite, and the Jebusite, and the Amorite, dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanite dwelleth by the sea, and along by the side of Jordan.

And Caleb stilled the people before Moses and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.

But the men that went up with him said, We are not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we.

And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had spied out unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone up to spy it out, is a land

that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the men that we saw in it are men of great stature.

And there we saw the Nephilim, the sons of Anak, who come of the Nephilim; and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight."—NUM. 13:25-33.

Here also is the account which the two spies of Joshua brought Joshua:

"And they went, and came unto the mountain, and abode there three days, until the pursuers were returned; and the pursuers sought them throughout all the way, but found them not.

Then the two men returned, and descended from the mountain, and passed over, and came to Joshua the son of Nun; and they told him all that had befallen them.

And they said unto Joshua, Truly Jehovah hath delivered into our hands all the land; and moreover all the inhabitants of the land do melt away before us."—JOSH. 2:22-24.

These attitudes are perfectly typical. You may see them in any congregation of God's people. There are always saints in the service to whom difficulties loom on the horizon of possibilities as insuperable barriers in the way of progress or achievement. There are always also some, though not always in the place of leadership, who have heroic courage, a living faith and hands and hearts ready to serve in any good task. I have been interested in the men and women who come into the fellowship of the Church. Here is one who assumes that the church is filled with men and women who would exclude him from privilege. That he must break down a firmly erected and carefully guarded wall of coldness and unbrotherli-

ness. That if he would do anything in the service of the Master under whose banner he has enlisted, he must do it in spite of his brethren. He thinks of himself in relation to his fellows in terms of contempt and assures himself that they think of him in like terms. There crowds upon my mind now the memory of such a man. He remained in the Church only a few months. He then departed and kept company again with his own. In going he railed against everything and everybody because he did not find in the Church what he came seeking. Yet he had found exactly that! There had been no place for him. His occasional visits to the sanctuary had not been heralded. No opportunities of service had been rendered him and so he had rendered no service. The thing he had most desired had not been achieved since he had waited for someone else to accomplish it. He came into the land and saw the difficulties and the giants. He saw that there was good fruit and good pasturage and goodly cities of delight, but he was perfectly sure that they were not for him, and so after beating and bruising his spirit against the barriers of circumstance between him and God's heritage for him, he went away bruised, broken, disappointed. No one could cure him, no one could change his circumstances. His attitude was but the demonstration of his nature.

There is another attitude of those who come into God's Church. They bear their welcome in their

own hearts. They believe in the best of their fellows and for themselves. It never occurs to them to doubt that they have a contribution of thought, service or influence to make. There is a place for them. They make friends as readily as the spring sun makes flowers when it falls upon a congenial soil. They occupy places that seem to have been built for them before they came. Walled cities either open their gates to them or the walls fall at their approach. Fair fields of promise become rich fruitage of realization. The milk and the wine of Canaan fatten their souls, rejoice their hearts and they enter at once into a goodly heritage of love and confidence with their fellows, while great and many doors open to them for service and usefulness.

In connection with the young fellow of whom I have written above, there comes into my mind at this moment with equal insistence two others who came into the Church about the same time. I found them one day in the vestibule of the church welcoming strangers, introducing men to each other, creating an atmosphere of home and cheer and love. I said to them, "I thought you fellows were strangers." Their reply was significant: "We came in as such. We did not come in to remain such. We have observed that there are many strangers who come to this congregation. We have sought to serve them; to create for them a welcome. We know that they did not know that

we were strangers. We have not told them, but in helping them to find friends and a Church home and a welcome in service, we have found a place and friends and created a useful service for ourselves." Certainly that was the spirit of the two spies who under Joshua's direction went up to the strongholds of Anak to the very same territory and the very same land that the ten spies of Moses had passed through, and the two brought back a good report, saying: "Surely Jehovah our God has delivered into our hands all the land."

There is an ancient fable of a father who upon his death-bed bequeathed to his son an entire estate, which consisted of a house on a poor farm. But in telling his son of the inheritance which was to be his, he said to him: "There is a fortune for you hid in the orchard." After the death of his father, the son set himself to find the fortune. He dug the orchard over, bare to the roots of the trees. In vain he searched. No fortune rewarded his labours. Too disheartened and discouraged even to cover up the roots of the trees, he left them exposed. The cold of that winter destroyed the insects which had been sapping their vitality. The direct contact with the fresh air and the coldness and heat of the following season wrought a new lease of life for every tree. Branches were laden with fruit out of all proportion to any past experience. And the fortune which he had looked for in the ground he found in the trees. So God hides

His best promises under the hard crust of difficult circumstances. He will not do His children the wrong of having them born with golden spoons in their mouths. It is not His purpose to weaken us by ease, to coddle us with undeserved comfort, by distrust of our willingness or our ability to overcome hardships, break down barriers or achieve conquest. But He ever leaves us the good cheer of an unfailing promise that they who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; that nothing is too hard for God and that it is His good pleasure to give His own their kingdom; and that in the fulness of time His ripening purposes in them will come to a perfect fruitage.

#### THE SCARLET WOMAN

Now it is a matter of unusually challenging interest that the first fact recorded by the Holy Spirit concerning the entrance of Israel into Canaan is that both the spies and the nation are involved with the Scarlet Woman. It is distinctly shocking that the first item of interest here is this incident with the harlot, and that the first person of interest in the land which they enter to possess, is the harlot herself. What is the meaning of this? We must remind ourselves just here that all Scripture being God-inspired is profitable for correction, for reproof, *and for instruction*. God's lessons may be learned, though they do not lie upon the surface of the record. To the super-

ficial thought or to the unbelieving heart, contact with the fallen woman is a distinctly unsavory experience. Social repugnance and moral antipathy alike arise in protest against her presence, and seek to avoid the unpleasantness of her contact. What then is the meaning of the presence of this woman upon the first pages of this narrative of conquest by the people of God of the land of God's promise for the purpose of God in their lives.

#### REMINDERS

Be reminded then that Israel is commanded to make conquest of this land not upon their own but upon God's behalf. God shows Himself to be a man of war. His warfare is against sin. He will drive the nations out before Israel because their cup of iniquity is full. At least this is the appearance of the matter as we approach the truth from the direction of the nations. So far as their disclosure explains the purpose of God, that purpose is revealed in their iniquity. They are unfit to dwell in this land. Even from this angle we must always remember that it is the land of promise, the land of covenant relation. It is a holy land created and ordained for a holy people. The unspeakable atrocities, the unmentionable carnalities, the lowest degradations, the persistence in sin, the criminal attitude of ignorance and rebellion as regards the God of all the earth, have combined to fill their cup of iniquity full. Rebels



against His sovereignty, traitors to every cause of truth; dull and insensate souls refusing response to the presence of the Spirit of God they are unfit even for God's mercy. This terrible fact appears on every page of inspiration's record. The sinner and his sin are identified the one with the other. That is if he persists in it and lives through his life and comes to his final accounting with God unrepentant. The sinner, whether individual or nation, stands before the judgment bar of God identified with his sin. There is only one law of God concerning sin. Sin must be destroyed. Sin is rebellion, treason, sedition against the holiness of God.

Now the harlot more than any other sinner illustrates the sinner's identity with sin and its disastrous results. Lying, stealing, covetousness, even murder itself may be a thing apart from life in its intimacies and as viewed in its results. That is to say, men take account of circumstances in relation to those sins against the moral law. One's whole social life need not necessarily be destroyed by those sins. While, of course, any and all sin springs out of a corrupt nature, there is a peculiar quality in the sin which makes a virtuous woman a harlot. Her whole nature is shot through by disintegrating forces. The morale of morality breaks down. Nowhere else does total depravity so clearly appear. Not that she may not have some good traits of virtue in other directions but the

thing to which she has sold herself, whether for pleasure or profit, enters into every fibre of her being and vitiates her every faculty. In the train of that sin, trail all the vices and even all the virtues of life. The results of her sin are likewise disastrous and universal. This is true however may be considered her case. Put it on the ground of the purely physical. There follows the dwarfing of stature, the corruption of disease. In Canaan even the land was defiled by it. This is the sin which resulted in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. They were lands of free love and sensuous indulgence of carnal appetites unbridled. Liberty was here turned into license, privilege abused and purity perverted to a personal abandonment to evil appetites. Love was transmuted into lust. No wonder the wrath of God blazed upon such a land and such a people. Of necessity death is entailed. The very earth groans waiting for the redemption of the bodies of those upon whom sin has laid its mark. Physical sin contains physical death. No man sins without his body.

All this, Rahab represents in the story as it is presented concerning Israel's entrance into the land. But there are far more and perhaps far worse aspects of the case. Rahab's sin strikes at the root of every social virtue and every social inheritance and institution. She was not simply a fallen woman herself. She trafficked in virtue. She built her house on the wall. She stood on the

street corners to invite young men in and they went in, not knowing that they went to their death. Solomon knew her, in type at least, long afterward when he wrote, "Now she is in the streets, now in the broad places, and lieth in wait at every corner." "I discerned among the youths a young man void of understanding, passing through the street near her corner, and he went the way to her house \* \* \* so she caught him, and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him, Sacrifices of peace offerings are with me. This day have I paid my vows. Therefore I come forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face and I have found thee \* \* \*. Come let us take our fill of love until the morning. Let us solace ourselves with loves \* \* \*. He goeth after her straightway as an ox goeth to the slaughter \* \* \* and knoweth not that it is for his life." Thus she must have caught the two spies.

Oh, that terrible scarlet robe—insignia of shame, sample of social corruption and disintegration. The harlot's business strikes at the root of marriage, undermines the home, lays a stigma upon childhood, becomes a cancer upon the social body, menaces the very life of the state, overturns all social integrity. Sodom is the age-long illustration of the evil of free love and the judgment of God against free lovers. There is a direct contrast in the words of the Master between His denunciation of the days of Sodom and the days

of Noah. In Sodom men bought and sold and builded. In the days of Noah men bought and sold and builded, married, and were given in marriage. No word of marriage or giving in marriage in Sodom, and so the wrath of God fell upon the corrupt city. Rahab at the entrance of Canaan indicates the type of life which had corrupted the very ground and made the earth to cry out against her inheritance to the living God. But there were more than even physical and social disasters attendant upon her sin. There were moral judgments, for all these things which have gone before grow out of wrong relation to God. Physical and social disorders in the world have their root and spring from one source. Man's wrong relation to his fellowman is determined always by a wrong relation to God. No man can be right with his fellowman until he is right with God. Neither man nor nation can be right with God without getting right with their fellows. The panacea for sin is holiness, the righteousness of relation between men and God flowing forth naturally into the righteousness of conduct. Indeed, holiness inevitably issues in righteousness. God designates spiritual infidelity as moral harlotry. "And they shall eat, and not have enough; they shall play the harlot, and shall not increase because they have left off to take heed to Jehovah. Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the understanding \* \* \*. Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone. Their

drink is become sour: they play the harlot continually; her rulers dearly love shame. The wind hath wrapped her up in its wings; and they shall be put to shame because of their sacrifices.”—Hos. 4: 10-11, 17-19.

James carries forward the same thought when he says: “friendship with the world is enmity against God.” In these striking arraignments: “Whence come wars and whence come fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your pleasures that war in your members? Ye lust and have not; ye kill and covet, and cannot obtain; ye fight and war; ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may spend it in your pleasures. Ye adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world maketh himself an enemy of God.”—James 4: 1-4.

#### THE SINNER IS DESTROYED WITH HIS SIN

Now the task of Israel in the land of Canaan is to cast out and destroy a sinful people in order that God may establish therein a holy people. There must be no compromise, and God's oft-repeated warnings and commands to them are that, root and branch the nations must be driven out. Men and women and even children they must destroy. Evil communications corrupt good morals. Sin is re-

bellion. The covenant of a holy God can continue only if and where rebellion is stamped out.

But when it comes to the matter of destroying the sinner two methods are possible. Actually to destroy the sinner and substitute another man for him or to destroy the sinner's sin and so change the sinner into another man. Thus it was said to Saul by Samuel: "And the spirit of Jehovah will come mightily upon thee and thou shall be turned into another man \* \* \* and it was so that when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, God gave him another heart." There is a significance in the fact that Judas in the apostolic circle is supplanted by Matthias. Now Judas had hanged himself, and another man was selected by the disciples to take his place. But Simon who also denied his Lord is changed into Peter and the result is the same: the apostolic group remains loyal to the Lord Jesus.

Now in the prophetic purposes of God the nation must destroy and supplant the nations. If the nations remain in the land the nation inevitably perishes. It appears to be the purpose of God that the nation in its warfare against the nations must employ both a moral and military force. They must drive out the peoples who possess the land, physically or transform them morally. Rahab is a living illustration that God's first privilege is the use of the moral force. Rahab, the harlot, is destroyed, and Rahab, the woman, redeemed through her faith, is lifted into the line of royal ancestry

from which the final Prince of the House of David, the King of Israel, must Himself spring. It will be borne in mind, of course, that in Israel, church and state were identical, for Israel was a theocratic nation: a nation, but a God-governed nation. A nation with all the appurtenances and functions of civil and military government; but all these were under the direct and immediate control of the sovereign God, so that the acts and decrees of the nation were identified with those of God. In the church this is manifestly different. The church is a spiritual body in a world corrupt both spiritually and physically. Thus the decree of God that there should be a total divorcement between church and state. In the present dispensation God has committed to the state whatever use is to be made of civil and military authority. Indeed there is much more which one may read concerning that fact. It may even be said that in the present dispensation it seems to be the purpose of God to hold the national life of Israel in abeyance and leave the nations that forget God to work out their destiny according to the plans of their own misguided resistance of His sovereignty. The employment of military forces now tends only toward a moral destruction, and no nation is guaranteed success, because no nation has garnered into the treasury of its faith the rich purposes and promises of the living God.

The church can undertake and must undertake the regeneration of the peoples of the earth by the



spiritual dynamics of the Gospel. That portion of the race which yields to the invitation of the Gospel message will be as surely substituted for, by a new manhood and womanhood, a new creation in Christ Jesus, as if they were bodily driven from the earth and a new and holy people substituted in their stead. Thus God's mercy always seems to outrun his justice and the patience of God ever holds in abeyance His judgments.

#### THE SCARLET THREAD

This is an overwhelmingly clear and convincing story. The two spies sent out by Joshua were received by the harlot and sheltered in her home. As in all such cases the news got about that the two spies had entered the city. They were traced to the harlot's house; but she, discerning the menace of their presence and the dangers of their discovery, led them to the roof and covered them there with bales of flax drying upon the roof. When the officers came she told a judicial lie and delivered them from death. In their gratitude, as they were about to depart, being lowered by her over the wall under the protecting darkness of the night, they promised her that when the city came into the hands of Israel she, her family and her house, should be spared, upon condition that she on her part should bind and keep displayed in her window a scarlet thread.

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS SCARLET THREAD

Scripture has one voice. Scarlet, crimson, has ever been the colour of sin and of sickness. The skin flames from pink, to red, to scarlet, to purple in blood poisoning, in the hectic flush of fever, in the deep red of one's bruises or burns. So scarlet is the colour of physical and moral hurt. Thus God says to Israel in that marvellous first chapter of Isaiah: "Ah, sinful nation \* \* \* the whole head is sick and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it but wounds and bruises and festering sores \* \* \*. Come now and let us reason together saith Jehovah. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

## THE WOMAN'S SIN

When the woman consented to the scarlet thread, she consented to identify herself with her sin. There was to be no alibi for her. It was Rahab, the harlot, who was to be spared. It was the house of Rahab, the harlot, that was to stand when the walls of Jericho crumbled. It was the family of Rahab, the harlot, which was to be involved in her salvation. Not another Rahab! Doubtless there were many others in Jericho. Though Scripture exalts this Rahab to the company of the highest and holiest women of all Israel's history and includes her in the number of those whose names are re-

corded as ancestors and ancestresses of the Lord Jesus, she is distinctly listed as Rahab, the harlot. Among the heroes and heroines of faith who claim a place in the catalogue of those who constitute for us a cloud of witnesses, who hover above the arena in life's colosseum of conflict, Rahab, the harlot, has place and mention. By James also she is enrolled among those who are conspicuously listed in the annals of history, as illustrating the necessary sequence between faith and righteousness, between a right relation to God and a right relation to their fellows. "And in like manner was not also Rahab, the harlot, justified by works in that she received the messengers and sent them out another way."

White is the colour of peace. Blue for ever indicates loyalty. Purple is the royal colour, but scarlet is the sinner's crimson stain and scarlet is Rahab's colour. God will deal with Rahab, the harlot, the confessed sinner. The moment she consented to tie the scarlet thread in her window, that moment she undertook not alone to identify herself as a party to the spies' terms of salvation but she identified herself with her sin as the particular sinner out of all the city to whom the fulfillment of that promise is guaranteed. Thus for us in God's Word and in His providence: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." This is the very spirit which the Lord Jesus commended in His story of the publican who smote upon his

breast daring not so much as to lift up his eyes to heaven saying: "God be merciful to me, the sinner." The Master says he went down to his house justified. God exalts the humble, for the Son of man came to call sinners to repentance. He came not to call the righteous but the sinner, and to save that which was lost.

#### HER SUBSTITUTE

But here also Rahab consented to identify herself, not alone with her sin, but also with her substitute. In Joshua 2:14, the spies use this remarkable language to Rahab. Having cautioned her to tie the scarlet thread in her window and to see that it is preserved there, "the men said unto her, our life for yours," or as the margin of the Revised Version puts it: "Our life, instead of you, to die." And again the men said unto her: "Behold when we come into the land thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by; and thou shalt gather unto thee into the house thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household. And it shall be, that whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him." Now scarlet is the colour of blood and the blood is the life of the flesh, so that she has now tied there in her window type and symbol of blood to be shed in substitution for her. Thus Jesus became sin for us. His life for ours. Him

who knew no sin became sin on our behalf. Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. There is an illustration of this fact in medical science. One is sick. Certain germs have entered into the blood and disorders and death are resultant. The physician comes, takes a drop of the blood, analyzes it, makes a culture, produces a serum and sends the germ thus treated back into the blood as an antitoxin, and it becomes the death of death, a substitute for death. And life is preserved by the death of death thus accomplished. So Jesus, our Substitute, sin on our behalf, dying, is made available to us and being received into our lives, He becomes the death within us to our sin; "in Whom we have our redemption through His blood."

#### THE BLOOD ANALOGY

But to complete this analogy. The sinner identified with her sin and the sinner identified with her substitute, we must realize the deathlessness of the substitute. It is not enough that their life should be for hers; they must live to make good their promise of redemption. It is not enough for the sinner that Christ died on the cross for the sinner's justification in his behalf, but it must necessarily be true that Jesus rose again for his salvation and that He shall ever live to make intercession for him, according to the will of God. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. So we find here in the story

of the spies and the harlot a beautiful completion of the analogy. The two spies abide hidden in the mountains three days before they go back to the camp and appear before Joshua on her behalf. So Christ is three days in the heart of the earth before He goes up to appear at the right hand of God for us. Death sought Him, but corruption could not hold Him. Because He lives, we also shall live. Men sealed the gates of the grave to hold Him; but He could not be holden of death. Being God's holy One, He could not see corruption. "Death of death and hell's destruction," He is made unto us wisdom and sanctification and redemption. He that was dead is alive forever more and has become in His own proper person the guarantor of our immortality.

#### THE EXCHANGE OF THE SCARLET ROBE

No greater nor more typical transformation could possibly have occurred than that which occurred in Rahab. Character is changed in the change of her relation to God and with the change of that relation and the consequent change of character all life's relations are changed. And all life's habits, conduct and purposes are transformed. Her people are changed. One can almost hear whispering in her heart the voice which later was heard from the lips of Ruth to the weeping Naomi: "Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people,

and thy God my God; where thou diest, I will die and there will I be buried." Her residence is changed. We know not where she dwelt, but Jericho was destroyed and became a curse. Her very destiny is changed. Somewhere in the transformation she found a house, not for a harlot and her infamous traffic, but for a wife and mother.

Transformation like that was as the coming of day out of the womb of the night. It was a transformation from silence to song; from weakness to strength, from shame to glory, from death to immortality, from the abyss of hell to the height of Heaven. You will find it all written in marvellous language in Eph. 2:19, "So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God." And this is only a foretaste of what is to be, for is it not written: "What manner of love hath the Father bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of God, and we are. Beloved now are we the children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that when He shall be manifested, we shall be like Him; and everyone that hath this hope set on him purifieth himself even as He is pure."—I John 3:1-3. And in I Cor. 2:9, "As it is written, Things which eye saw not, and ear heard not, and which entered not into the heart of man, whatsoever things God prepared for them that love him." And finally in Heb. 12:22-24, "But ye are come unto Mount



Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect and to Jesus, the Mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better than that of Abel."

John, opening the portals of the Heavenly City for us through his Patmos vision, permits a glimpse into the mysteries of the world to come. Among the marvels of that land and life beyond, John writes: "I saw, and behold a great multitude, which no man could number, out of every nation, and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands; and they cry with a great voice, saying, Salvation unto our God who sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels were standing round about the throne, and about the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me: These that are arrayed in the white robes, who are they, and whence came they? And I say unto him, My Lord, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they that come

out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God: and they serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall spread his tabernacle over them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat; for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life; and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Thus Rahab, the harlot, with her brothers and sisters of the scarlet robe of sin, through their substitute and Saviour are transformed into saints upon whose shoulders the scarlet robes are changed to the white robe of His righteousness and whose shame of earthiness is translated into the glory of Heaven.

## IV

### THE PRESENCE OF GOD

*"And Jehovah said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee. \* \* \* And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither, and hear the words of Jehovah, your God. And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you. \* \* \* And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the covenant stood; and they are there, unto this day. For the priests that bare the ark stood in the midst of Jordan, until every thing was finished that Jehovah commanded Joshua to speak unto the people, according to all that Moses commanded Joshua; and the people hastened and passed over."—JOSHUA 3:7, 9, 10—4:9, 10.*

**P**ERHAPS the greatest fact of revelation is the fact of personality. By no other means than revelation does man know God as a person. To the naturalist He is force; to the evolutionist He is energy, or the sum of all energies inherent in nature; to the pantheist He is nature. To the Christian Scientist He is impersonal mind.

The heart of revelation is that God is a Person. The insistent demand of revelation upon man is that he recognize personality, that is, the sum of all those traits necessary to define what it is to be a person. Personality is living being with the power to see, to feel, to choose, to act. Without question all those places in the Bible where God has attributed to Himself bodily presence, the pos-

session and use of bodily members such as hands, feet, eyes, ears, etc., are written anthropomorphically, that is, figuratively, are attributed to Him, the members possessed by man's body in order that man with his finite intelligence may conceive the Person of God in action. But clear distinction should be made between those passages and those attributing to God, the power to think, to feel, to choose. Corporeality is not necessary to personality. One does not need to possess a body in order to be a person. Otherwise there could be no spirit, no demon, no disembodied life, no hope of continuity. The first fact of God revealed and insisted upon by Scripture is that He is a living, sentient, acting Person, able to communicate His will to men, able to require and enforce obedience from men, able to set in motion both moral and physical forces in the world; able to bring to judgment and to punish those who disobey His will. This Person requires recognition of Himself as sovereign and is the maker of the moral standards of men as well as the creator of the material universe. There is no escaping Him in the Scriptures. The supreme folly as revealed in the Scriptures is to deny Him or to rebel against Him, or to refuse the joyous doing of His will as made known by Him in the inner consciousness through the written word.

#### SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS

The first expression of divine personality is consciousness. When Moses asks by what name he

must present Him to Israel, in order to induce them to undertake the exodus out of Egypt, He answered: "I AM that I AM!" That is, self-existence and self-consciousness, finding self-expression.

#### SELF-CONVEYANCE

The second essential quality of personality is its necessary self-conveyance. Life sends forth itself, as the sun sends forth its radiance. There are immanations of personality. We have some illustration of what this means in the earthly experience of Him Who was God manifest in the flesh. One day a woman touched the hem of His garment in the crowd. She was healed, and began to shrink away in humility. But the Master turned and demanded to know who had touched Him, for said He: "I perceive that power has gone out of me." There was another day when a mob had gathered about Him, mad with lust for His blood. Religious prejudice and religious bigotry had combined to dethrone moral sanity and they would kill Him who was their Prophet, Priest and King. But a wondrous thing happened. Jesus passed through their midst and no man cast a stone or laid a hand upon Him! It is said that His hour had not come, but marvellous must have been the fact of His majestic presence to those maddened minds. Something went out from Him to them. His thought dominated their thought, His desire their desires, His will their wills, and so they hung as it were

suspended in midair with the stones still in their hands and murder still in their hearts, but incapable of expressing themselves in action because of His singular power of self-conveyance. The same thing appears when the mob assembled with staves in Gethsemane. They said: "We seek Jesus." He stepped forward to meet them and used the same expression concerning Himself that God had used to Moses in giving him His majestic though terrible name—I AM. Then the mob went backward and fell on their faces, so terrible was His presence, so mighty the outgoing of His power. When I come to declare to you the living God, this is He of Whom I speak, the Living One indeed. Self-existent, self-conscious, self-conveying, there is no escaping Him. Wisdom cries out to men: "Make peace with Him, bring yourselves into harmony with Him, learn His ways, live in His will, render Him service."

#### IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

The highest fact in man is that he is created a personality. "In the image of God created he him, male and female made he them." Man is a person as God is a Person. Man's body does not change the fact of his personality. He is equally a person with or without his body, and he is capable of responding—this created personality—to God the Creator Personality. As deep calls unto deep, as auditory nerves to sound waves, as optical nerves

to light, so man, sentient personality, responds to God the Living Personality.

Man's first expression is self-conscious existence. The one absolute fact of knowledge for him is this: I am. Beyond that he does not know absolutely anything unless it be, since I am, God is.

Also, his second self-expression is the conveyance of his personality. Man has power to impose his desires or will upon another. Without a word he can by his presence, his look, his mere moral attitude change, determine, direct thought, desire and action of other beings. For instance, children easily and intuitively sense the various moods of their mothers. This quality of life's self-conveyance enables man to oppose the personality of God with his own personality or to yield to God. Harmony between the Creator and the creature personalities is holiness and moral order in the world. Discord between these two is sin and moral chaos in the world. Herein is the mystery of Christ explained—one personality, He has two natures, the two natures that avail as daysman between God and us. Christ as God represents God to men. Christ as man is the Priest taken from among us to represent us to God. So in His one personality expressed in two natures, He is our peace, who breaks down the middle wall of partition between God and us and makes of the two, one. He heals the estrangement which sin had made; bridges the chasm of separation which results from sin and establishes



a blessed unity for us with God for time and for eternity.

#### PERSONALITY REVEALED IN PRESENCE

But personality without presence is impersonal. Therefore, the oft-recurring insistence: "Ye shall know that the living God is among you." An absent deity, a non-resident God, would make small appeal to men who by their moral natures demand communication with their moral governor. Since God is, and since He rules, I, a living personality in moral subjection to Him, must have both the right and the power to approach Him, to know His will, to discover His way, to learn His plan and His program for me and for His world. Job voices the cry ascending from every human heart: "Oh, that I knew where he is, then would I appear before him and set my cause in order." The very heart of our confidence in God as ruler, life-sustainer and governor lies in the promise from Him to us: "When ye call, I will answer." "I will be with you;" "I will guide you with my eye;" "I will never leave you nor forsake you." We may "come boldly to the throne of his grace to find mercy and obtain help in every time of need." Elijah found the very heart of man's necessity when he challenged the prophets of Baal and Asherah before assembled Israel: "Let the God who answers by fire be God." There is a majestic calm in His soul arising from confidence in *the God*

*who is present.* The prophets of Baal may gnash their teeth and gash their flesh and cry with wild despair, and get no answer, because Baal is not God. But quietly the prophet of Jehovah lifts his voice. God does not need to be awakened nor recalled from a journey in order to be persuaded to hear. He is not a God afar off. He is here now, and His servant quietly lays his case before Him and there is immediately a miraculous response. The fire falls. The offering is consumed. God is with them! This is always so with His people. As He was with those of the past, so is He with us of the present. The very essence of faith on the part of those who come to God is that they believe that He is and that He is within reach of those who diligently seek Him.

#### THE PRESENCE OF GOD IS REALIZABLE

The purpose of God is not alone to reveal His personality or to reveal His presence. It is rather, in the assumption of the reality of these two facts, to make His presence realizable. God magnified Joshua that Israel might know His presence. Here, for them and for us is the solution of all ills. Here is the guarantee of all good. Here, in the presence of God, is the inspiration of all holiness. In the realizable presence of God men may be induced to that wisdom which leads to living one day at a time and realizing themselves and God in that day. Thus all problems and tasks, experiences and rela-

tions, must be brought into the living presence of the living God for judgment and for adjustment. God is saying to Joshua: "I am here, lead on." So Israel heard and followed on obediently. Gird up your faculties, command your powers, discharge your obligations, perform your duties. Realize my presence and you will know that

"Life is real, life is earnest,  
And the grave is not its goal.  
Dust thou art, to dust returnest  
Was not spoken of the soul."

In the realized presence of God, all life assumes a different character, takes on a new quality. Here the servant of God will be fervent in spirit, not slothful in business, serving the Lord. Here whatsoever he does, he will do unto the Lord. No man realizing the presence of God will have his life's work classed with that which is described in the Bible as eye-service, men pleasing. But they will forever live as men who expect directly to stand in His revealed presence and shall when they see him face to face, be without shame, in all the confidence of a good conscience.

But souls there are who hide from God's presence or ignore it. I stood a while ago by the pulpit on the platform in my church where I went for a quiet hour of communion. A man came into the auditorium, came down to the table in front of the platform, stood there within three feet of me for perhaps ten minutes and never sensed my pres-

ence. He never knew that I was there! It was an incredible experience to me. A soul so dull as not to realize intuitively the presence of another personality in such close proximity. There are antennae of the soul which should reveal such a presence to any but to one hopelessly dull.

A great manufacturer talked intimately to me of the sorrows and perplexities of his household. A sister had been sick and the sickness dragged itself out into weary months of anxiety and sympathy. And then this Christian man, brother to the sufferer, said: "We have settled into a kind of despair, we have tried to pray, we have tried to understand, now we have simply to go on, plainly there is no answer." Oh, dull soul! But there is an answer! God is at home in the world and His will is for those who seek His presence and learn to trust His grace and His providence to find understanding and comfort in His presence. A young business man, whose place of business had been swept away by fire and who with his young partner had been obliged to make a quick decision and to assume serious responsibility, told me in relating his experience: "If father had been at home, we would have called him in and would have known what to do and we should have rested upon his judgment, and all would have been well." Oh, that all the perplexed, troubled sons of that other, our Heavenly Father, might know that He is at home, that He is within reach, that they can call upon

Him whenever they will, and that before they call He will answer.

Perhaps a necessary question is: If this is true, if God is here, and His presence is realizable, how will that presence be manifested, and what will it signify? The answer seems to be perfectly simple and direct from the story of Joshua, as from the experience of all His children.

#### THE HEART OF THEIR ENEMIES MELTED

The presence of God brought confidence to His people and cowardice to their enemies. Moses, in his great intercessory prayer as recorded in the thirty-third chapter of Exodus, urges: "Now, therefore, I pray thee, if I have found favour in thy sight, show me now thy ways, that I may know thee, to the end that I may find favour in thy sight: and consider that this nation is thy people. And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. And he said unto him, If thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence. For wherein now shall it be known that I have found favour in thy sight, I and thy people? Is it not in that thou goest with us, so that we are separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth? And Jehovah said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found favour in my sight, and I know thee by name."

The people are to know the presence of Jehovah.

Now, in Joshua 2: 9 and 24, it is twice repeated: All the inhabitants of the land melt away before you. For we have heard how Jehovah dried up the water of the Red Sea before you, when ye came out of Egypt \* \* \* and as soon as we heard it, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more spirit in any man, because of you, for Jehovah, your God, he is God in heaven above, and on earth beneath." Melting enemies are the necessary consequences of adamant faith. That is true whether the enemies be people, or institutions, or appetites, or the principalities and powers above or about us. They melt away at the presence of God. This fact was even more evident after Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came to reside in the Church. This was according to the promise of the Master: "Ye shall receive power, the Holy Spirit coming upon you, and ye shall be my witnesses," bearing my testimony, performing miracles in my name, enduring hardness for my sake, making good your good confession.

Strange, God's people cannot realize that there are no difficulties to God; that one who walks straight forward even though he must walk in the dark, relying upon the presence of God, is assured of safe convoy in life's journey and a successful issue in life's work.

#### CONSCIOUS CONTROL BY GOD

There is another evidence of God's presence and another fact of that presence indicated in Joshua

5:13 ff. Joshua had gone out to view the walls of Jericho and he lifted up his eyes and looked and behold there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand, and he said: "As Prince of the Host of Jehovah am I now come." And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him: "What saith my Lord unto his servant?" And the Prince of Jehovah's host said unto Joshua: "Put off thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy." And Joshua did so. Here then is born out of the presence of God a consciousness of God's plan, a consciousness of God's program and a new consciousness of the power from God to accomplish the God-appointed task. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." I can never make plain enough to you this stupendously important fact that God is here, that the Spirit of God resides within you and that, therefore, there are no difficulties in the way of accomplishing His will for you. The willingness to have Him supreme, to submit to Him all life's plans, problems and purposes, and to look to Him for all life's power is a guarantee of success in life's work. I can imagine myself standing before a great picture whose beauty and charm draw upon me with such irresistible and compelling power that suddenly there should arise in my soul a yearning so great as to become a necessity, to reproduce this same picture upon another canvas. Yet I should be utterly



unable to do that even with all my appreciation of the artist's work. I have not the artist's skill. My clumsy fingers could not wield his brush nor mix his paints nor follow his lines. But if by some magic the painter himself could return and enter into my body, his personality dominating mine, his thought, will, passion, skill, taking possession of my faculties, then I could paint and do upon another canvas what he had done upon this.

Even so facing life's tasks, I realize my utter incompetency and cry aloud with Paul: "Who is sufficient for these things?" But in all reality the Holy Spirit does enter and take possession even as God said: "I will dwell in them and walk in them. I will be their God and they shall be my people." Does my mind yearn to know and to do His will perfectly, then in all good confidence I may say: "I can do all things through him who strengthens me?"

#### THE WALLS OF JERICHO CRUMBLED

There are many explanations for the crumbling of the walls of Jericho. It is said that in their building they had been attuned to the same pitch of the sound raised by the trumpets of marching Israel. It is suggested that they fell under the impact of the repeated tramp of the marching hosts keeping step, etc. There is only one true explanation of their falling—God. If these walls did not fall miraculously the Bible falls inspirationally.

Seven days of marching around these walls found not one single act of opposition directed from its inhabitants to Israel. Israel employed no arms or engines of war; they assailed a walled city with nothing but stout hearts. But with the blast of the trumpets and the shout of the people the walls fell, they crumbled, they disintegrated. Their collapse was complete, immediate and terrible. God's work is not alone overturning, it is demolishing. He not only cast down the walls of Jericho, but He forbade their rebuilding. There is a story of an Irishman who built a wall twice as thick as high in order that, as he said, if it should fall over it would be twice as high as ever. Thus we view our difficulties, our Jericho walls, but God who begins a good work will complete it unto the end. The walls He casts down may never be rebuilt.

God does not aim at reformation, but at regeneration, for it must be remembered that God is dealing with sin in Canaan and Jericho. He demonstrates how His holy presence deals with sinners. Perhaps you have a Jericho in your life. Some sinful habit entrenched. Perhaps you are walled about with habits, customs, circumstances, conditions, excuses or unbelief. Here God is calling you by the example of Joshua and Israel to rise to-day, march around your Jericho, blow the horns of victory! Go again and again, seven times, about these impregnable barriers and shout your note of victory. "Sin shall not have dominion over you."

“For freedom were you called.” Every unholy thing within the citadel of your life shall be broken down and burned out. Our God is a consuming fire. No wedge of gold must be saved from the debris. Walls, buildings, precious stones and treasure store must all go down and be consumed in the fire of His presence. The whole citadel has been devoted to God. What gold has been preserved must be devoted to Him. He is here, I tell you! Dare you realize and not avail yourself of His presence? Your enemies will melt away in His presence and your Jericho walls will fall.

But He waits for you to put the government of your life in His hands. There can be no withholdings. There can be no other dependence. There may be no sharing of authority. He must have you—all of you. He must direct your ways—all your ways. He must make your plans—all your plans. He must supply your resources, all of them, and give direction to your energies without a single reservation.

Dare you let Him have His way with you? Let go and let God!

“All your sins now confess—

Let go and let God.

He will forgive and He will bless.

Let go and let God.

Yield to His control.

Let go and let God.

Peace will then fill your soul.

Let go and let God.”

## V

### GOD'S MEMORIALS

*"And the people came up out of Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and encamped in Gilgal on the east border of Jericho. And those twelve stones, which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua set up in Gilgal. And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, When your children shall ask your fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones? then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land. For Jehovah your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over, as Jehovah your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up from before us, until we were passed over: that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of Jehovah, that it is mighty; and that ye may fear Jehovah your God for ever."*—JOSHUA 4:19-24.

MIRACLES appear everywhere in God's Word and in His dealings with His people. The meanings and the messages of miracles never cease. They doubtless have continued from the beginning until this day.

We have in the third and fourth chapters of the Book of Joshua a direct illustration of God's use of miracles and of the fact that He builds His miracles into memorials. Joshua is upon the brink of the Jordan. On the other shore lies the promised land, Canaan. It is the land of settlement and of conflict. The settlement cannot be established until the conflict is turned into conquest.

Lying between the place where he encamps when the forward movement begins and the possessions of the promised land rolled a murky stream over which there are no bridges nor pontoons available for the two millions who follow Him. But God is with them. He has reiterated His promise to be with Joshua as He had been with His servant Moses. More than once. Now He promises to begin the demonstration of His presence. That demonstration is to take the form of a notable miracle. The priests bearing the ark of God are to move forward until their feet touch the waters of the rolling Jordan. Immediately thereupon God is to demonstrate His presence with Joshua and the people of Israel by stopping the flow of the river and making a passage of dry ground for their feet. In anticipation of the performance of this miracle, Joshua prepares twelve men to take out of the river bed each a stone which must be carried forward and used in the erection of a memorial pile or column to celebrate perpetually the fact of God's presence with His people on this occasion and to serve as a reminder that He will be with them forever so long as they abide within the conditions of His covenant promise. The story in its entirety is full of interest and charged with a profound challenge.

All God's memorials, like His miracles, are designed to advertise to the world and to the people therein the fact of God's presence in the world.

Therefore His miracles and His memorials are of such a nature as to Provoke Attention; Promote Inquiry; Provide a Testimony.

#### TO PROVOKE ATTENTION

The one great necessity of God with men is to get their attention; to arouse them from the habit of neglecting, disbelieving, ignoring or taking for granted His presence and His interest in the world. Dr. A. J. Gordon once wrote of the Holy Spirit as "The Neglected God." One is not sure whether God is more neglected in His world or taken for granted with a kind of impersonal and fatalistic faith. It will be recalled that when Mary came with her Son, who was also her Lord, Jesus, to Jerusalem at the Feast, upon that occasion when He appeared in the temple asking the doctors questions and answering their questions, that she went three days' journey on the way home without the boy Jesus, *supposing that He was in the company*. Of course, men will never know what their neglect of God costs them, nor the full extent of the loss entailed upon taking Him for granted. They that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. That sort of worship necessitates alert minds—moral faculties on the *qui vive*. Dull, lethargic, phlegmatic souls never sense the reality nor the significance of God's presence, and sad to relate, most of the souls of men through their easy contact with sin and the easy indulgences of their

senses, become dull, even insensate to the greatest, the most vital spiritual realities. This has been true through all the centuries, with all peoples. Its truth is nowhere more apparent than in the history of the chosen people who had the high distinction of being God's possession, God's heritage. They "do always resist the Holy Spirit." They do always live as if God were not. And in that example of moral stupidity the world has generally followed them.

Therefore the record of God's dealings with men is everywhere a record of the spectacular, the supernatural, the unusual, couched in terms of "signs and wonders." The Holy One seems to act upon the principle that if the attention of men can once be riveted upon the fact of His presence in their world, they will inevitably begin to practice the presence of God and to exercise a daily consciousness of the judgment of their lives by the fact of His presence.

That is why God builds His miracles into memorials for the people, so that one generation has the miracles and the generation that follows has the memorials. That is, the memorials of God in the earth are the materialization of His miracles. Their record in stone was symbolic. The record of miracles in stone or in ordinances and rituals are always symbolic and spiritually significant. The course of all God's miracles among men has become the perpetual religious memorials to which



men cling and which they revere. Take some illustrations of this fact. There was the rainbow. It is not probable that the rainbow came into being first on the occasion of the flood. The physical aspect of the rainbow is the result of certain physical laws known as the refraction and reflection of light. Rainbows have doubtless been cast as long as light has played on water. But when God delivered Noah and his family, and would make that deliverance by means of the ark, a message of salvation and a warning against sin to all generations, He wrote the symbolism of deliverance into the bow. It is probably true that the rainbow shines in the heavens somewhere upon the earth every day, so that there is no day in which the men of this world and of this generation may not be reminded of God's judgment of sin and of God's mercy in salvation.

Take the Tower of Babel as an illustration of this universal fact. The united peoples of the world in their pride and self-sufficiency sought to build a tower by their own hands to reach from earth to Heaven, that they might regain for themselves without change of character, without the humility of confession of sin, without the necessity of divine aid, a heavenly residence and a divine companionship. But God smote them at Babel with the confusion of tongues; divisions fell among them, and they were scattered to the four corners of the earth. Their diversity of speech, their varieties of tongues,

continue until this day. So that any man on the face of the earth who meets a foreigner speaking a tongue different from his own must have a reminder that God is in His world; that He is the Judge of all the world; and that He hates a haughty spirit; that He humbles the proud, casts down the lofty and exercises for Himself sovereignty in the world.

The Passover of the Jews has through thirty-five centuries given voice to this same great truth. The lamb without blemish slain, with its blood sprinkled upon the lintels of the doors, its flesh eaten by a people standing, as they mingled the unleavened bread and sour wine, became a perpetual reminder to the Jewish nation that their God was their Saviour. The angel of death and of judgment passing through the land laying tribute upon every Egyptian home and requiring the life of every first-born of the people, withholds his hand from all the homes and lives where the blood appears. So that every time a Jewish worshipper has observed his Paschal Supper he has reminded himself and his generation of the fact of the presence and the power of God in saving a people from the sword of the destroyer and from Egyptian slavery.

Perhaps it was for this reason that God insisted that Moses should build a tabernacle after the pattern given in the Mount in order that upon the very structure of the temple might be written: "The Lord is in His holy temple. Let all the world keep

silent before Him." If you have stopped at any time to consider the peculiar structure of church buildings, distinct from all residential architecture, as from that of all other institutions and buildings for commercial purposes, you must have considered also the fact that these buildings were so constructed as to challenge the attention of men. They are different. They are frequently unsightly. They are very often the very opposite of practical, and yet they do advertise to the world the fact that a people there is who believe in the presence and saving power of God.

We state positively, therefore, that the great need recognized of God in His dealings with men is that their attention should be gained for God. In the case of Joshua and Israel their attention must be gained in the matter of God's appointed leader. "This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel that they may know that as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee." It is no whit different from the thing God is saying to His churches in the letters that He sends to them by the Seer of Patmos, "These things saith He that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, he that walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks." Now the seven stars are the ministers, the overseers of the churches. There God would call attention of His churches to the fact that He is with His ministers and that through them and their ministry His voice is to reach the world, challenge its con-

science as to its sin and win it to a faith in the Saviour.

“Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any one will hear my voice and open the door unto me I will come in unto him and sup with him” is the direct challenge to a cold, indifferent church, taking its religious experience for granted, and presuming upon the presence of God and His favor as a commonplace of daily life. God is always knocking at the doors of our consciences, calling attention to His presence; offering to reveal His power, to manifest His grace and to accomplish through us His purpose in the world. That is the meaning of every miracle and every memorial of God. That also is the meaning of many a providence of God. He withholds blessing, He withdraws His favor. He brings us up against a stone wall and leaves us consciously, confessedly hopeless and defenseless. So even the things which we call providences or the acts of providence, are just God’s reminders that He is present. Many a child disobedient in the light, clings with intensity of devotion to his father in the dark. Many a prodigal leaving home with full pockets when he finds he is abandoned in consequence of dissipation, runs with hastening feet back to the gate where waits the father with his welcoming kiss. God takes away health or property; He permits the removal of a loved one that by that means He may call your

attention to His presence and His plan for your life in the world.

What is true of individuals is equally true of nations and of institutions. Great disasters, epidemics, pestilential diseases, war, famine, visit people. These things are the voice of God saying: "I am here; forsake your sins; return unto the Lord and He will have mercy." The Sunday following the *Titanic* disaster saw the churches of England and America filled to capacity with worshippers. It is common knowledge that in England during the war, when battles went against their armies, they crowded the churches to worship. It ought not to be necessary that God should have to deal thus with us. He urges us: "Be ye not as the horse or as the mule, which have no understanding, whose trappings must be bit and bridle to hold them in, else they will not come near unto thee."—Psalms 32. He would deal with us graciously always if we would only listen to His voice and obey His will.

Great deliverances and great benefits God also sometimes uses to call attention to Himself. No nation which has erected monuments to its victories or statues to its heroes could ever forget that back of these men and these hours of crises in their history stands God; and that as they use their privileges or abuse them they must be called into judgment by Him Who holds the balance of life and destiny in His hands.

It was for this reason that the stones taken from the bed of the Jordan, as Israel crossed over, were builded into a memorial. They would perpetuate the knowledge of the presence of God in the earth.

#### TO PROMOTE INQUIRY

The thing was peculiar. Nature did not thrust up these twelve stones into this peculiar pile. What more natural then that the children growing up, or the stranger passing by, should ask of their parents or others: "What means this?" That this was God's purpose is not left to our guessing. Joshua 4: 21: "And He spake unto the children of Israel, saying, When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones? Then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land. For Jehovah your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over, as Jehovah your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up from before us, until we were passed over; that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of Jehovah, that it is mighty; that ye may fear Jehovah, your God, forever." Here is provision for family instruction. It may be made the theme of many a fireside story, the topic of conversation of many a pleasant walk. It could easily be turned into the inspiration for faith, for reverence, for obedience, for an affectionate devotion to One

Whose outstretched arm wrought so great a salvation, provided so great a deliverance.

This pile of stone may easily become the occasion for propaganda. The stranger who knows not Jehovah will stop to inquire, remain to be instructed and be brought to worship. For the same reason God has established other memorials. Here is Baptism and the Lord's Supper in the churches. What more provocative of inquiry than these observances. No intelligent being can look upon them, if in ignorance of their significance, without being prompted to inquiry. And the intelligent answer to the inquiry must inevitably lead to the fact of God's presence in the world and of the graciousness of His dealings with men. There are multitudes who, like Jacob, sleep at the gate of Heaven and know not that Jehovah is in this place.

Happy are we that the story we tell never grows old. That the marvellous presence never grows commonplace and that the mightiest human interest is the realest divine interest.

#### TO PROVIDE A TESTIMONY

It should be borne in mind that the memorial is not in itself an end. That memorials should be so considered is the perpetual danger of memorials. We worship the shrine rather than at the shrine. Our holy day becomes not an expression of spiritual worship, but a kind of spiritual fetish. Take the American national Thanksgiving Day. Originally



designed as an occasion of genuine outpouring of praise and thanksgiving to God, now for the most part made simply an occasion of holiday, feasting and self-indulgence. From the joyousness of a heart service, it has degenerated to the formality of a Presidential proclamation. The same purpose and experience might be observed in the Jews' reverence for the Law. He will write it in his Talmud. He will make it the test stone of his racial loyalty, but he will utterly disregard its precepts and ignore its admonitions. All of this is perfectly illustrated in that historic instance in which when Israel went to war with Philistia, the ark of God was sent into the battle line as a talisman of victory. But the presence of the ark without the presence of God was soon demonstrated to have no value, and the ark is captured and taken to the house of Dagon. There God returned to His ark and Dagon fell from his pedestal before the presence of Jehovah. A blasphemous nation is visited with boils and plagues of mice until they confess the presence of Jehovah and humble themselves in obedience to His presence. No memorial of God was designed of Him to become a medium of worship, but a reminder of the presence of God Who must Himself be worshipped in spirit and in truth.

The purpose of orthodoxy is not orthodoxy. Thinking right is not an end in itself. An orthodoxy correct in formula may be utterly devoid of power. There was nothing so correct as the Phari-

saic creeds and nothing so corrupt as Pharisaic practices. The memorial is vain unless it bears the living testimony of the presence of the living God. Thus shall you let your children know, that God was here. Therefore God Who is here wrought our deliverance. Therefore you may count upon His working your deliverance. God is above the forces of nature, and He set them aside when His people were in need. God is, and He is a rewarder of them who diligently seek Him.

That is the Great Commission to the Old Testament saints: "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so." That is the Great Commission also of the New Testament: "Go ye into all the world and make disciples of all the nations." Give to the world the Gospel message. Give to the world the Gospel in symbol, the testimony in Baptism and the testimony in the Supper. The testimony of Baptism is a testimony of death and resurrection three-fold. Here the observer watching this strange procedure is bound to be moved to ask, "What means this?" "Why this burial one by another in the watery grave?" To which when intelligent and Scriptural answer is made, there is borne at once the whole Gospel message. First, the death of Christ for our sins and His resurrection for our salvation. That is the basis of our faith. Second, our death to sin and our resurrection to a new life in Christ. That is the experience of our faith.

Third, the possible death of our bodies, but the certain resurrection of those who die in the Lord. That is the hope of our faith.

All these are embodied in the one act of baptism. So that when one observes and understands, the whole Gospel message is told in eloquent though silent terms. The testimony of the Supper is equally simple and equally compelling. "As oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do show forth the Lord's death till he come again." Therefore in the testimony of these memorials, both of which are erected at His command to represent in memorial form great spiritual realities, we face the world, compelling their attention and assured of the keenness of their interest. And we are saying to them with every faculty alert, "Christ died but He rose again. He has gone from the earth but He is coming again. He is not a dead Christ, but a living person, the coming Lord, and we who know Him live daily as in His presence." And so searching our lives by His presence, we live them by faith and we all receive of His fullness, and grace for grace.

## VI

### FALLING WALLS

*“So the people shouted, and the priests blew the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, that the people shouted with a great shout, and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city. And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, both young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword.”—JOSHUA 6:20-21.*

THE miracles of the Bible are the source of its most constant attack and the element of its greatest strength. The supernatural element in revelation has been the stone of stumbling and the rock of offense to every unbelieving mind whether the unbelief arose from a moral disorder or an intellectual. But the Bible cannot surrender its supernatural element without surrendering every claim to being a supernatural revelation. Concerning its greatest miracle, Paul questions Agrippa, “Why should it be thought a thing incredible by you that God should raise one from the dead?” The emphasis of that question is upon the Holy Name. The amazement in the mind of Paul was not that Agrippa, or others, should stumble at the thought of the resurrection.

That is a perfectly natural source of doubt until you stop to consider Who it is that raises the dead. Paul's amazement is that Agrippa, or others, should feel any reluctance to accept the resurrection of the dead when God did the raising. Grant a living God whose nature and character is that of the God of the Bible and there is no difficulty in accepting the fact of the supernatural and the reality of the supernatural manifestations described in the Bible. God is the author of natural forces and laws. These forces and laws are therefore subject to Him. They are the results of creation, hence must be obedient to the will of the Creator, the God who brought order out of chaos. God preserves order from chaos, even in the event of His suspension of those laws by which He has protected and maintained order. In other words, again to appeal to scriptural language, "It is in him that all things consist," as it is by Him that all things are made. Men who object to the miracles on natural grounds fail to reflect that the God of the miracles is the God of nature, and that the laws which are supposed to be indispensable for the natural order of the universe are laws which He has made and are therefore subject to His sovereign will. It is both a grievous and violent assumption that God has withdrawn Himself from the active control of factors and forces of nature, and has made the laws which He created His plenipotential vice regents. The violent assump-

tion which staggers belief is that simply because ordinarily He works by law and through force which He has set in motion, He will never intervene or operate independently of these forces.

There are many objections to the miraculous elements of the Bible on the part of unbelievers, materialists and evolutionists. They say that the accounts of the miracles are the result of developed legend. That there was a strange and inexplicable happening of some character which gradually as it was repeated became a tradition of wonder, and so grew through successive generations which were able to transmit the story and the wonder only by oral tradition into a supernatural occurrence, a miraculous event. There are those, also, who declare that miracles are simply the result of ignorance and superstition of a primitive people who stood in awe of natural phenomena because they were unable to explain them. These gentlemen have been reduced to every sort of ridiculous expedient in the effort to explain away the simple narrative of a book which portrays the majesty, glory and power of God operating for the establishing of His kingdom in the earth and the manifestation of His power in salvation.

Oh! the miracles of unbelief! For instance, there is the landslide theory of the Jordan crossing and all that that theory involves. Scientific gentlemen, sceptical because unregenerate, igno-

rant of His ways because out of harmony with Himself, glibly assert that there was no supernatural element in the crossing of the Jordan. That instead of a supernatural intervention, what really happened was that a landslide somewhere above the ford occurred, thus filling the channel of the river with rock, clay and debris; that the children of Israel were quick to take advantage of this seeming providential intervention and so they passed over. Suppose we grant for a moment that this theory does not contradict the story. How do these same gentlemen account for the fact that Joshua led Israel down to the brink of the Jordan prepared to cross over before the landslide occurred; that the order of march had been determined; that the priests to bear the ark had been selected; that men had been provided to carry stones for the memorial pillar from the bed of the Jordan, and that the landslide occurred at the very time when all these preparations were complete; and that the waters of the river were blocked only long enough for the nation to pass over when this accidental dam suddenly broke and the river proceeded on its course to the Red Sea? How do they account for the willingness of a leader to risk, and a people to consent, to the precipitation of two million people, men, women and children, with their cattle and flocks, with their furniture, households and caravansary into the bed of a treacherous stream on the blind faith that an uncertain dam



would hold the waters from their natural course till they were safely passed over? I ask, which credulity requires more? This which I have described, or the simple scriptural narrative that God intervened supernaturally to complete the settlement of a theocratic nation in the land of divine appointment, and that Israel's preparation to cross was made in the faith that God would intervene?

Take the case of the falling of the walls of Jericho. These same gentlemen who stumble on scientific grounds at the possibility of the miraculous are hard put to it to discover a reason which would satisfactorily explain the falling walls of the doomed city. Among others it is offered that Israel had been able to gain certain friends within the city, treacherous to their own people, who, when Israel appeared before the walls, treacherously opened the gates of the city to them, and after entering they battered down the walls.

The least, and perhaps the best, that can be said about that explanation, and others, is that it is a denial *in toto* of the detailed description of the narrative in the Scriptures, and we are forced at once to embrace one of the horns of the dilemma and accept the scientific explanation to the rejection of the scriptural narrative, or reject any other explanation and receive in the simplicity of a childlike faith the Bible account.

The Scriptural account of miracles must stand if we are to leave the Bible any value, and there

are still some who are unwilling to relegate the Bible to the limbo of mistaken fables, folk-lore stories and outgrown scientific explanations of man in his infancy. Keeping in mind that every consideration of the supernatural described in the Bible as emanating from time to time from Almighty God must involve a due consideration of the Person and powers of God, it is not difficult to accept as realities those miracles recorded as "evidences in the natural world, but out of its established order and possible only by the intervention and exertion of divine power; an intervention of such a character that it can be rationally referred to no other cause than the immediate volition of God, and designed to authenticate "the assertion of the divine personality, presence and power in the world."

Now, miracles, as recorded in the Bible, occurred seemingly at only five periods of the world's history. In the beginning, at creation; in the life of Abraham, or at the beginning of the chosen family and its faith; in the establishing of Israel as a nation, or at the beginning of the national life of the chosen nation; during the apostacy of Israel, when God would by supernatural intervention stop a downgrade of national life and the moral disintegration of the social life of its people. Like a man who has let a train go by on the same track a thousand times flags it with a red light in the face of desperate and im-

mediate danger. Then miracles occurred finally during the life of the Lord Jesus and the beginning of the establishment of His church in the earth. The records of all miracles in the Bible indicates a purpose to establish faith in the minds and hearts of men concerning the presence and government of a personal holy God. They declare His person, His presence, His power.

#### GOD DEMONSTRATES

Except those of creation, which are designed simply to demonstrate God's presence and power in the world, all scriptural miracles are meant to demonstrate God's conflict with Satan and with sin. The one underlying motive in revelation is the display of God's conflict with Satan for the throne of government in the world; in the life of the individual; in human institutions; and in all human governments. From the beginning of that story of the serpent in the third chapter of Genesis, to the story of the binding of the serpent in Revelation 20:1-3, this conflict has been the theme of the story which Scripture unveils. This is true whether the miracles described were God's intervention in sickness, in war, in supply of food, or in overcoming any barriers to the progress of His people.

All miracles have their center around the crisis of that struggle between God and Satan, between holiness and sin. All have been left on record to

stimulate and justify faith Godwards. Faith is the attitude which enthrones God in His universe and recognizes His presence and His continued activity in the upholding of His order in the direction of its destiny and in the management of its affairs. Unbelief is the denial either of the personality of God, of His power, or of His presence. Unbelief relegates God to the remote past so far away as to leave Him incapable of present interest in, management of, or control over the things He has created.

Now whatever other arguments against the supernatural may be raised, every Christian must stand here. You cannot accept Christ and reject the supernatural. For Christ is the heart of the revelation of God's dealings with sin. Christ is Himself the supreme miracle and God's supreme demonstration. He is God manifest in the flesh, supernaturally born, living a sinless life, dying a sinless, and therefore a vicarious, death, and raised in the Spirit of holiness by the power of God in a glorious resurrection from the dead. He has ascended on high and left a sure promise of His return. I repeat it. No man can accept the Christ of God, as He is revealed in the Scriptures, and deny the supernatural. There is no other explanation of Christ. There is no other point of view from which to regard Him. But the acceptance of Christ is not an intellectual problem, it is a matter of the heart, for it is with the heart man

believes unto righteousness, while with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

#### JERICO IS AN ILLUSTRATION

The book of Joshua is the record of God's conflict with sin. That is the meaning of Israel established in Canaan. The holy nation was being brought in to supplant the nations whose cup of iniquity was full and who were therefore justly to be destroyed root and branch because of their lawlessness toward God. Jericho straightway shut up is perfect type of sin and sinners entrenched against and defiant of God, of His purposes, His plans and His people. When Israel left Egypt under Moses, Pharaoh was saying: "Who is Jehovah that I should let Israel go out?". When Israel comes into Canaan under Joshua, Jericho is saying: "Who is Jehovah that I should let Israel come in?". Now as it was the strong arm of God, the mighty power of their Jehovah, that delivered the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage through a series of conflicts and of supernatural interventions on their behalf, so that no man might say that it was by the ingenuity, the prowess, or the power of man, that Israel was delivered, so now upon their coming into the land of promise it is the unaided supernatural intervention of God that brings them in. As God had answered Pharaoh's challenge in the exodus, so He now answers the challenge of the nations in Jeri-

cho. Moses in reminding Israel of its past and exhorting them to safeguard their future uses this strong encouragement to their faith: "He brought us out that he might bring us in." Now, those who know God's methods and are acquainted with His faithfulness thoroughly understand that He who has begun a good work will complete it. Therefore, since He brought them out of Egypt that He might bring them into Canaan, it is His strong arm that will remove every barrier of resistance and break down the walls of the hostile closed city in demonstration of His presence with, and His favour to, His people Israel. Only God's power is used there. Not a trench is dugged; not a battery is mounted; not an agent is employed; not even a sound is heard save upon the direction of that divine leader Who came as Prince of the armies of the Living God to take command even over Joshua. There is no marshalling of armed hosts; no hurrying transportation of munitions; no frenzied appeals to patriotism; no facing the terrors of the waiting hour for those who were to go over the top to force entrance. God spoke and the walls went down.

When the ten spies came back to Moses with their evil report they had made much of the cities walled up to Heaven, but God when He leads Israel in makes His word the test. Gibbon, in his "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," declares that as long as the church had no patron

but the Holy Spirit it moved on as an army with banners conquering and to conquer. Paul, who declares that our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in high places, against the rulers of this world's darkness, says with all confidence that "we are more than conquerors through Him who loveth us and loosed us from our sins." The weapons of our warfare are not carnal. "It is not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of God" that His people go forth to valiant conflict and certain conquest in the Name of the Lord.

But the tendency of the church is ever to trust the machinery rather than to trust God. The weakness of the church lies in her willingness to ignore the God of the church while exalting the Church of God. We need to restore Him to the horizon of our faith and confidence. We need to lift Him once again from beneath the threshold of our conscience. I have much sympathy for the fellow who had been redeemed from a life of dissipation in his answer to some criticism or question about the miracle when, at the word of the Lord Jesus, water was transformed into wine. "Ah," said he, "make water into wine? That's nothing! In my house this same Lord Jesus turned beer into carpets and furniture and food and clothing and comforts, and love, and joy, and



abiding content." He who has an answer let him bring it forward.

#### THE ARK WAS THE CENTRAL FACTOR

We must ever remember that the ark was the center of the march for Israel. The ark contained the law, that is, the two tables of stone which Moses brought down from the presence of God on Sinai and upon it was the golden mercy seat. The ark was preeminently and practically the symbol of God's presence. But it should be remembered that the ark was a token, not a talisman. Later, when Israel came to look upon it as a talisman rather than a token, it was captured by the Philistines and set up in one of their idol temples where it became a menace and a scourge to them. But now as Israel marches seven days once a day around the walls, and on the seventh day seven times, the ark is in the midst. God is fulfilling His promise to Moses in Egypt, "My presence shall go with you." It is not the marching people, nor the blowing trumpets, nor the shouting hosts, but God who brings the walls down. There is in all conscience enough for man to do, but he must do all in relation to and in dependence upon God. Oh, if we only keep in touch with God nothing can be too hard for us. Doubtless there were men in that camp who were not quite satisfied with the leader of the hosts. They questioned Joshua's wisdom and plan. There were doubtless

some who for intellectual or moral reasons rejected the probability of the supernatural. There were some who described faith as foolhardiness. There were many keyed to the last excess of hostility. If one had listened to those, or concerned himself with their attitude, he would have been troubled of heart and distressed of mind at the mere prospect of undertaking the march around Jericho. And if we listen to their excuses in the face of doubt in this generation we shall lose the pith and point of that whole story. No, let them alone! Keep your eye upon the ark! Accustom your vision to the glory of the Living God. Listen for His voice and when He speaks you will see the walls go down.

#### A MATTER OF FAITH NOT OF FORCE

We cannot question the fact that all human probabilities were against the walls of Jericho falling. Reason was against it; experience was against it; science was against it. The people were not organized for war; they were not equipped for it. But let it be remembered that God did not propose to bring the walls down because reason, experience, or science approved it. He did not propose to destroy this city through a people organized and equipped for war. God's plan was very simple. He would do this wonder at the completion of the following program which is altogether a program of faith. The priests were

commanded to trumpet and the people were commanded to trudge, and at the moment of God's manifestation were to shout the shout of victory. It all looked very foolish and futile to one whose feet knew no path but the path of experience, or the path of reason, but *mirabile dictu*, the walls went down. It was ever so with the Joshuas, and Daniels, and Davids. It may easily be so with you, in your life; in your home; in your church; aye, and in your world. You who are God's children are in Canaan saved, but your life attainments and achievements lie beyond you, and before you. Perhaps some Jericho lies between you and them. Its walls must fall before you can go on, before you can make progress. All the remainder of the territory lying ready for your conquest is unattainable until Jericho falls.

Remember, there is nothing too hard for God. You need an education and have nothing to go upon. But for you who would follow the star of definite purpose, obey the commission of divine authority, you who would become a teacher and a messenger of His truth, ignorance is wrong. And if ignorance stands between you and your best possible service, set your face against it, resolutely determine under God to have the training which His cause requires and the barriers which stand between you and your heart's desire will go down. I promise you that. Slavery entrenched in

America seemed a hopeless barrier to universal democracy within the nation—to the freedom of all peoples. But William Lloyd Garrison began to cry, “slavery is wrong and slavery must go.” They mobbed him in Indianapolis and in Boston. They tore down his printing presses and made his life unsafe, but because he was the voice of one crying on God’s behalf in the wilderness, “make ye straight the ways of the Lord,” his Jericho walls fell. The nation was disrupted but not destroyed. Her wounds were healed, and now without that cancer at her vitals moves on to a larger liberty and a larger service in the world.

You are saved, but there is opposition in your home to your testimony and to your service? Count on God. I think of the home into which I was myself called as a pastor. Here was a man saved from a life of great sin, living now a life of great useful service, but his wife stood in determined opposition to everything he held dear in his new life. She said to me, “I have not changed. I occupy the same position, live on the same level, embody the same ideals which we both had when we were married, and have had ever since.” She became all but devilish in her ingenuity to thwart and harass and distress that godly man, who, serene in his faith, followed the star of his hope and of his service. They left my city and went to live in another. It was many months after-

wards that a telegram came to a mutual friend:  
"Rejoice with me, Sarah is saved!" And then:

Heaven came down their souls to meet,  
And glory crowned their mercy seat.

I know a minister who in his pastoral relations has been opposed, thwarted, undermined, discredited by his own wife time after time so that he had to lay down finally his pastoral office. But that was but the hand of God stirring up the eagle's nest, and to-day that man who failed as a pastor is conspicuous in America as an evangelistic teacher and minister of the Word.

James Burns of the Kentucky mountains buried himself and his life ambitions on a lonely hill at Granville, Ohio, turning his back upon all that he had hoped to attain in the intellectual world and went back to become the apostle of peace and the messenger of love to all the mountain regions where feudal hate had once run riot. By the hand of one man God has overturned the feudal convictions of generations and brought moral and social order out of confusion worse confounded.

Will you permit the walls of your Jericho to shut you out of God's place, His purpose and His plan for you? If you permit it, they will thwart you in all your holy aspirations. But you may catch step with God and, encompassing the walls of your Jericho, march on obedient to the heavenly vision that inspires, and shouting even by

faith in anticipation of deliverance, find that the walls will go down before you and the victory which overcomes the world will be the reward of the faith which you gave to your God. This is a reward of faith than which there is no higher consummation to be attained in life. The simplicity of the conditions of victory in holy living make imperative their acceptance.

## VII

### COVETOUSNESS

*"But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the devoted thing: for Aham, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zereh, of the tribe of Judah, took of the devoted thing: and the anger of Jehovah was kindled against the children of Israel."*—JOSHUA 7:1.

**H**ISTORICALLY this chapter introduces us to a new and startling incident occurring during the initial stages of Israel's conquest of Canaan. It is the second illustration of God's dealing with His own people and with the nations who are to be cast out by them. It demonstrates the fact that God hates sin in Israel no less than in the nations. It sets forth clearly the fact that God will not tolerate disobedience. It makes evident the presence of the Prince of the Hosts of Jehovah and that He is the military commander as well as the civil governor of these people. There is instant execution of the first offender against the military law of this divinely commanded host.

#### ISRAEL IDENTIFIED WITH GOD

Israel is identified in this conquest of Canaan with God. They are a people separate, representative and mediatorial. They must, therefore,



truly and fully represent God in all their attitudes and actions. Their foes are His foes. Their problems are His problems and His holiness must be their holiness. The conflict is that of Jehovah with sin. Let that ever be remembered. The sinful nations are to be driven out before the holy nation whose Capital is to be the Tent of Meeting, while the executive chamber is to be the Ark of the Covenant within the Holy of Holies. From this central point, God demonstrates His presence and executes His will. It is His presence that dominates the organization, the movements and the undertakings of the holy people. From time to time He operates for them in marvellous wonder-working manifestations. This is due to His willingness to prove to His people His personality, His presence and His power. He dwells among them and would have them realize His presence and to realize upon His presence so that as they proceed in their campaign for conquest they may be zealous in His name and jealous of His honour. Already we have had two illustrations of God's method and meaning.

#### RAHAB

First there is the illustration of the identity of the sinner with his sin. Rahab, the harlot, figures prominently in the very first stages of their spectacular and eventful entrance into Canaan. The scarlet woman and the scarlet sin fully repre-

sent the identity of the land and the peoples thereof with that wickedness whose overflowing cup had invited the wrath of God. But Rahab had been saved, delivered from association with her nation and incorporated with her family into the nation of Israel. Thus was again demonstrated the fact that God would forgive and transform a repentant sinner. Though He must cast out the sinful nations, His first effort is by means of moral rather than military force. No repentant sinner, individual or nation, ever failed to find mercy from God, and a new chance. Our God is the God of a New Chance!

#### JERICH0

But no sooner had the lesson of Rahab been taught than Israel faces Jericho straitly shut up against them. From it no man went out and into it no man came. The city was the gate to the land. It stood straitly in the path of all progress. Israel could not pass it by and ignore its presence even had there been a highway by which they could proceed. To do this would have been to leave an armed and entrenched enemy in their rear. Jericho's closed gates are therefore an open defiance to God. As Pharaoh had said, Israel cannot go out, so Jericho says Israel cannot come in. The complete collapse of the walls of Jericho and the destruction of the city demonstrates God's

wrath against and destruction of sinners in rebellion against Him.

That is the setting for the sin of Achan. In the face of the uncompromising warfare of God against sin in every form, in spite of the blazing wrath of a holy God against sinners, at the very first opportunity Israel falls into sin. Oh, the stupidity of man! Oh, the senseless blindness of the hearts of men! Alas, the perverse wills that set themselves against God, either denying His presence or presuming upon His forbearance in the vain hope that their sin will not find them out.

#### THE REIGN OF GOD

The kingdom of God appears in this world under three aspects. The reign of law, the reign of grace, the reign of a Person. While all three overlap each the other in a general way, the reign of law is in the past and was national. The reign of grace is now and is universal. The reign of the Person is future and is both national and universal, through its international aspects. The nation Israel demonstrates the reign of God through law—though the reign of law marvellously overlaps by the presence of that divine Person who is to sit upon the throne of David and govern the nations of the earth from Mount Zion when He shall return again to the earth. Thus the Captain of Jehovah's hosts advertises the Presence of the Prince.

The reign of God is the personal rule of God in all the affairs of daily life, alike for the individual and for the community. This fact was to separate them from all other people. A test case for the fact was made at Jericho. Here was a people only recently accustomed to freedom not yet having learned fully the restraint of law required to lend instant absolute obedience to the will of an invisible Master (whose presence had now been fully demonstrated) in withholding their hands from that which most tempts the cupidity and appeals to the ambitious appetites of men. Wealth and women were to be made immediately accessible to this nation, and they were required to withhold themselves from possession of both. When the city was taken all perishable stuff was to be destroyed. Men, women and children were to be slaughtered, and all gold, silver, brass and iron were required to be devoted to the service of God. No sterner test could possibly have been devised. Here will be demonstrated the reality of the submission of this nation to God or its secret rebellion against His government. Its disobedience in this matter can be interpreted no otherwise than as rebellion against God, the Governor. For theocracy is most perfect autocracy. The will of the governor is imposed with absolute authority upon the wills of the governed, and rebellion against the ruler is treason against the state. And rebellion unrebuked must inevitably become speedily a per-

icious sedition, spreading in the civil body like leprosy in the physical body. The theories of law are valueless apart from its executions. Danger signals on the highway of life are given to point to the disasters which follow their disregard. So in the matter of Ai. Achan is dealt with summarily, since to ignore his sin is to plant a cancer at the very vitals of the nation's life.

#### THE SOLIDARITY OF THE FAMILY

As an understanding to and a sidelight upon this story the solidarity of the family is revealed. The family bears one name. It has one corporate interest. The head of the family represents his household and has responsibility for the acts and duties of its individuals. This fact is less generally recognized now than among ancient and oriental peoples, but it conveys, nevertheless, an imperishable principle. There is unity in name, in nature, in responsibility and in privilege. One needs but to mention the feuds of the Kentucky mountains, the clans of Scotland, the Tongs of China, to understand how universal is the application of this principle and how world-wide is its significance. But the solidarity of the family is no less real nor manifest than the solidarity of the nation. Here, too, Kipling's fine phrase expresses the truth: "The strength of the wolf is the pack, the strength of the pack is the wolf." Universally among the nations there is a well-recognized prin-

ciple that the whole nation is held responsible for injury to one citizen of another nation. Wars, indemnities, international agreements between nations, have hinged upon and grown out of cases of individual claims or injuries. The humblest citizen of any nation may become the cause and subject of international communications, the severance of international relations or the provocation for international struggles.

Even so, also, the church is one body, "If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it." The presence of one wicked man in a church unrebuked becomes a source of spiritual and moral disease to the whole body. Frequently the purging of a church of some notorious sinner becomes like the pruning of a tree, both cause and inspiration for more fruit bearing.

So then, with these preliminary remarks and this setting let us look at the sin which gives Israel defeat at Ai.

#### COVETOUSNESS

This one word is the summation of the Ten Commandments, is the comprehensive sin, embracing violation of all moral law. Covetousness has in itself the root principle of every social vice. God makes the Tenth Commandment to embrace every bit and every direction of man's evil desire. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not cover thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-

servant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's." Thus sin takes on a vastly more dreadful aspect when covetousness is directed not towards one's neighbour, but towards one's God and Governor. Covetousness has a very evil name. There is no decent family of moral virtues that will tolerate its presence. It has the nature of an infamous disease and its results are uniformly deadly. The dictionary definition of covetousness is: "The character or condition of being covetous, especially in an evil sense—avariciousness." I offer this as being the Scriptural revelation of its character: "Covetousness is an inordinate love of money or materials growing out of a wrong relation to God or man." Covetousness is born out of the spirit which takes or withholds from God that which is rightly His in order to use it upon myself. Covetousness is therefore the worship which one offers when he substitutes self for God as the object or person of primary consideration. James describes it perfectly in his epistle, fourth chapter, third verse: "Ye ask and receive not because ye ask amiss that ye may spend it upon your pleasures." Your covetousness may arise out of the principle which takes or withholds from one's fellows in the hour of his need to hoard for one's self. In either event, covetousness violates the law of God. Casting aside one table of the law or the other to the destruction of both, for man can-



not be right in his relation to his fellows while wrong in his relation to God. Any wrong relation to one's fellow is proof sufficient of a bad relation to one's God.

Nothing demonstrated Ahab's infamous relation to God more perfectly than the story of his taking of Naboth's vineyard. He thought it a small matter to listen to the counsels of Jezebel, but God made it the occasion of severe judgment and of dire punishment. Said Elijah to him on the highway, "the dogs shall lick thy blood in the field where Naboth was slain," and it came to pass even so.

Our Lord charges with hypocrisy those who say of their substance "it is corban" in order to withhold from the demands of filial love that which they would use as their own or hold for their own evil desires.

Covetousness is ever attended by greed, theft, extortion, over-reaching, oppression, indifference to the world's suffering, indifference to the demands of God's cause, hard heartedness and miserliness.

#### THE PROCESS OF COVETOUSNESS

Covetousness ever proceeds along certain definite lines. Its process and its progress are according to certain moral laws understood by the student of spiritual psychology. They are found perfectly revealed in Achan's answer to Joshua: "I

saw, I coveted, I took, I hid." These are the very processes by which Eve rebelled against God. "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat."—Gen. 3:6. These are the processes also of all sin. "But each man is tempted when he is drawn away by his own lust and enticed. Then the lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin, and the sin, when it is full-grown, bringeth forth death."—James 1:14-15. In the highway of life, God's danger signal at this point never varies and never dims. His solemn warning is of a proven significance and value, "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vineyards." Tolerate no beginning of covetousness, no spirit of miserliness, let no inordinate desire have its way. Safety lies in the simplicity and sincerity of obedience to the divine injunction to devote everything to God.

#### COVETOUSNESS AN ATTITUDE OF THE MIND

At this point it is well to take into account an injunction of the Holy Spirit recorded in Heb. 13:5, "Be ye free from the love of money." The margin of the American Standard Revision properly translates: "Let your turn of mind be free from the love of money." To dwell upon this love of money, its possession and powers is of extremest danger. In religion everything depends upon

the attitude of the heart and mind. To be filled with the Spirit is to be in the attitude of being filled. To pray without ceasing is to be in the attitude of constant prayer. So to be free from the sin of covetousness is to have an attitude of heart and mind toward money that puts God first and gives Him dominance over and control of one's self and one's substance alike. "The love of money is the root of all evil." "One cannot serve God and Mammon." The Mammon-money becomes master in the mind. Thus man's will becomes enslaved and loses its freedom in the sonship of the divine Father. With Mammon in control, the life becomes subject to every temptation of evil and to temptations toward evils in almost every possible direction. Now throughout God's Book, He makes a test of this attitude of the mind in the tithe. The tithe is an acid in the test tube of your affections, demonstrating the precipitations of your faith. The nature of covetousness in the thought of God is indicated by the company to which He assigns it. Here is the company in which it is given place of high rank by the Holy Spirit: "But fornication and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be named among you as becometh saints; nor filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not befitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know of a surety, that no fornicator, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, that is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the

kingdom of Christ and God.”—Eph. 5:3-5. Likewise, “Put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry, for which things’ sake cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience, wherein ye also once walked beforetime, when ye lived in these things. But now put ye also away all these: anger, wrath, malice, railing, shameful speaking out of your mouth; lie not one to another; seeing that ye have put off the old man with his doings, and have put on the new man, who is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him.”—Col. 3:5-10.

#### THE CURE OF COVETOUSNESS

Covetousness is an evil disease that enters into and vitiates the very fibre of mortal being. There is no earthly alchemy by which it can be healed. There is but one known remedy. That remedy is found in an attitude of self-emptying toward God and man. It begins in the centering of one’s affections upon the Lord Jesus Christ, of learning the quality of mercy from receiving divine mercy. It continues in the workings of grace in the souls of men who have experienced it. It develops in the realization of stewardship, the recognition of a definite ownership of ourselves and our substance by God. What we are is His. What we have is His. We hold it only for the Giver. A right at-

titude toward God, an overflowing first love for Christ will promote a liberality of spirit and a generosity of hand which must be cultivated and given free reign. Above all things else, to yield one's self to God, to love Him, to seek to know His will and to do it. That is the cure for this evil of evils. Oh, the delight of embracing His will! Oh, the joy of sharing with God our possessions and of using for God that which He gives to us in stewardship! Make for yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, said the Master. Use your money now in a way to lay up for yourself treasure in Heaven. Buy a book, build a school, send a missionary, support a minister, establish a hospital, care for the suffering, or the naked, the hungry, the poor. Use in the Master's Name, for His purpose, all you are and have, and one day you will find that you have made the best investment possible. Our God pays a great interest upon investments of life and money for Him.

“A young woman was one day visiting an aged man, a friend of her father, and one who was associated with him in early life. Though differing widely in sentiment, the two old men still felt a deep interest in each other, and kept in touch from time to time. The young woman found the old friend of her father a man who had run after the world and had overtaken it. He had obtained all that it could give and he had held that which he had acquired. Now he inquired of the state

of his friend whom he knew to be in moderate circumstances, far less satisfactorily situated than himself. With quivering face the daughter told the story of her father's patient suffering. And that with the cheerfulness of age he could look forward either to a longer period here or to the hour of release in death. As she talked, the old friend listened and conscience applied the message. Finally he exclaimed with a degree of impatience, 'Yes, yes, you wonder that I cannot be quiet and happy too, but think of the difference. He is going to his treasure, while I must leave mine.'"—TARBELL.

"What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" "What shall a man give in exchange for his life?" Achan got his wedge of gold and his Babylonish garment and had some satisfaction in hiding them in his tent. No human finger pointed accusation at him. But there was an all-seeing Eye on the wedge of gold and the Babylonish garment, and the sense of personal achievement and power in their accumulation were small pay for the judgment passed when he stood before the bar of God. Not alone himself, but his sons, his family, his friends, reaped with him the reward of that folly, which did not put first things first, but sought to live a life and make himself secure without God. Ah, you cannot buy back your opportunity to live nobly. You cannot win again the chance to give God the

supreme place in life if you spend your years in accumulating and hoarding the money which commands time, lays tribute upon strength, labour, and energy, devitalizes the spirit; and excludes all beside itself as the objects of devotion and service. Settle in your heart that turn of mind which will always seek first the kingdom of Heaven and His righteousness. Then shall all needed things be added to you and the glow of heaven's sunset hour will be dimmed by no cloud of regret nor any pang of anxiety concerning the darkness which lies beyond.



## VIII

### UP FROM SIN

*"And Jehovah said unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore art thou thus fallen upon thy face? Israel hath sinned; yea, they have even transgressed my covenant which I commanded them; yea, they have taken of the devoted things; and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have even put it among their own stuff. Therefore the children of Israel cannot stand before their enemies, they turn their backs before their enemies, because they are become accursed: I will not be with you any more, except ye destroy the devoted thing from among you."—JOSHUA 7:10-12.*

THE story of Ai does not end either in the defeat of Israel or in the summary punishment of Achan. We have in this story all the essential elements of moral lapse and recovery. By keeping clearly before us the idea of the solidarity of the family and of the nation, it is easy enough to individualize this story and its essential lessons. In other words, we have in the story all the essential elements of sin and salvation. Here's a complete picture of the disastrous results of a departure from God and the blessed means of redemption.

#### TEMPTATION

All sin has its occasion and its inspiration in temptation. That is, lust when it has conceived

brings forth sin. Now the root of all temptation lies in Satan's constant effort to induce men to act independently of God. Broadus, in his Commentary on Matthew, declares that the Master's three temptations were to under-confidence, over-confidence and other-confidence. That is, a correct analysis of all three aspects of the temptation of the Master indicates that his temptation was to confidence in something else or someone else than God. It was an inducement on Satan's part to the representative man to act independently of God. These temptations embrace all the varieties of trials which assail mankind. Temptations of necessity, of ambition, of position. All indicating that the path of desire or success lies away from God. The method of the tempter is to present an inducement to do wrong by the prospect of pleasure or gain. How often are we persuaded that it is easier to do wrong than it is to do right. Or, again, that righteousness must wear poverty's rags while wickedness is clothed in purple and fine linen. There is a mistaken notion abroad in the world, often among Christians, that to do right necessarily results in suffering. The philosophy of the world has reversed the wisdom of God, and declares with great plausibility and much assurance that godlessness rather than godliness is great gain.

The process in temptation is to excite the imagination, arouse the desire, and persuade the

will. This is a process from which the tempter never departs. There is no other place in man's life where all the laws of moral psychology are so clearly involved. Take the story as told by Achan in his confession to Joshua. "I saw, I coveted, I took, I hid." There are three definite stages then at which one may resist the tempter or yield to him. To yield at any stage of the trial is to prejudice the results of that trial in favor of defeat or of victory. Take an illustration from the antediluvian world. It is written in Genesis 6:5, "The imagination of the thoughts of his heart was to do evil continually." Imagination is excited by dwelling upon possibilities, or memories, or descriptions of delights from indulgence in sin; imagination which embraces the thrills that come in the excitations of indulgence. Imagination which lifts beckoning hand to sensuous pleasures is a sure indication of danger. Every wise man with spiritual discernment will put a firm hand of control upon the imaginations of his mind. For imagination easily excites desire, and desire is in the unregenerate nature, an unbridled steed whose mad drivings easily result in moral wreckage. The whole story of desire unbridled and disaster resultant is told in those flaming lines:

"I have thrown the throttle open and am tearing down God's  
track:  
I have thrown it out to full-speed and no hand can hold me  
back!

'Tis my arm controls the engine, though Another owns the  
rail,  
But for once I'm in the open and the yardlights pass and  
pale!

Green lights! Red lights! God has hung his signals  
out!

Caution here! Danger ho! And what's the man about!  
'Tis true he owns the engine, to do as he has done,  
But how about the Final Word—when he ends the run?

So from siding on to junction point now I shall have my day;  
I have stopped to read no orders, but I take the right-of-way,  
Down the open grade I thunder and around the curve I swing,  
For my hand is on the throttle and my heart shall have its  
fling!

Light lost! Life lost! Flag, O flag the others back!  
Switch the wreck! Ditch the wreck! Dare any block  
God's track?

There creeps into the Terminal the man who had his day,  
But I wonder, O my soul, just what His God will say."

Be warned; when desire has conceived, it brings forth sin. It is but a step from *I wish* to *I will*. It is but a span from *I covet* to *I take*. The citadel of the will is the last rampart to be taken by the enemy. It is poor business to wait, to set your resistance, to stand firm when your back is to the wall and your moral defences are all down. It were well to begin at the beginning to abhor evil and to shun its very appearance. Wisdom from God will be needed at every stage of the contest, and resolution; "Having put on the whole armour of God, to stand."

The effect of temptation is to test, to try, to prove. God is Creator, therefore Governor. Man

is creature, therefore a subject. Now the test of man's relation to God is, first, his willingness to know the will of God and then his ability to do the known will of God. I add the second clause—ability to do the will of God—deliberately in the conviction that the man who is in right relation to God has available for his use all the resources of God's strength, wisdom and power. He receives strength for strength and grace for grace. That is, as rapidly as he uses strength and grace, strength and grace are supplied to him in their stead and for the larger necessities which their use has created. God is always on the side of the godly man. "If God be for us who can be against us." Let it ever be remembered that temptation is not sin. Satan has already defeated those souls, and holds them at his mercy, who are persuaded that temptation is sin. Temptation only becomes sin when desire marries the devil. We are tempted when we are drawn away by our own desires, and enticed. Then when desire has conceived, it brings forth sin. Now because temptation is not sin, temptation is never an excuse for falling. It should be a reason for standing. David found it so, and wrote out of his experience: "I have set the Lord always before my face; therefore shall I never be moved."

"Yield not to temptation, for yielding is sin.  
Each victory will help you, some other to win.  
Fight manfully onward, dark passions subdue,  
Look ever to Jesus, He'll carry you through.

Shun evil companions, bad language disdain,  
God's Name hold in reverence, nor take it in vain.  
Be thoughtful and earnest, kindhearted and true,  
Look ever to Jesus, He'll carry you through.

To him that o'ercometh, God giveth a crown.  
Through faith we shall conquer, though often cast down,  
He Who is our Saviour, our strength will renew,  
Look ever to Jesus, He'll carry you through."

#### SIN AND DEFEAT

Sin is the collapse of man's moral relation to God. The Greek "*amartian*" is "to miss the mark." Perhaps literally, to be without a share in. Man was made for God, and he is always incomplete till he finds his completeness in God, and only in so long and so far as he maintains the perfection of his union with God. Man was made for God as yeast is made for flour. That which keeps them apart defeats the purpose of each in the other. Like the stones and timbers in a house, man must fit into his place in God's plan and program. Sin cuts God out of His pleasure in my life and cuts me out of any pleasure in God. The result in the spiritual life is like unto that which occurs in the body of a man when a nerve is severed, leaving the muscles paralyzed and useless. Therefore, sin is always defeat. The man who consents to sin defeats both himself and God. Indeed he throws out of order the whole moral order of the world and becomes a contribution to the moral chaos of the universe. He joins forces with Satan in his defiance of the sovereignty of God, and in his pur-

pose to destroy the throne of God and substitute his own reign over the moral creation. What a terrible significance is contained in the words which Jehovah speaks to Joshua: "Israel hath sinned, therefore the children of Israel cannot stand before their enemies; they turn their backs before their enemies because they are become accursed; I will not be with you any more except ye destroy the devoted thing from among you." In Ephesians 6:12 we are reminded: "The wrestling for us is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places." Man's success, therefore, in the thing God gives him to do in the world is wholly dependent upon the unbroken connection of his soul with the resources that are in God.

A young woman came to me recently and, after confessing freely her sin and the completeness of her departure from God, declared her stubborn purpose to demonstrate her ability in her own strength to overcome sin and to dethrone Satan in her life. It was impossible seemingly to show her the folly of such an effort. Having been defeated once, and thereby having suffered a complete demoralization of her spiritual powers without having established any connection between herself and God, she undertook to go back to the battle with an enemy who had already prevailed against



her, with her own confidence shattered, her own strength broken. Not so are moral victories won. Not so do men win for God in the world. Not so is the covenant of God established in the midst of men. Vitally true is that Scripture which declares: "Faith is the victory that overcomes the world," for faith is the link which connects us with God and makes available the resources of God for us in our spiritual warfare. Success in this conflict depends upon morale. Even secret sin undermines confidence steadily though unconsciously. There is nothing more certain than that defeat awaits God's people at Ai, when the Babylonish garment and the wedge of gold and the shekels of silver have been brought away from Jericho. Of course under the circumstances, Israel went to defeat at Ai.

There can be but one cause of the defeat or failure of God's people, sin. Sin is therefore moral disaster. "Behold, Jehovah's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither is his ear heavy, that he cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated between you and your God and your sins have hid his face from you, so that he will not hear."—Is. 59:1-2. Oh, sin is ruin! What a multitude of defeated men and women in this world bear testimony to this terrible fact. What an innumerable host have need to open their eyes to the tragic truth and reality of this fact. Sin is ruin, disaster, death and damnation. No

part of man's life escapes. The physical, the intellectual, the spiritual. All these suffer. The very world in which he lives groans and travails awaiting men's redemption from sin. The land is polluted by it. The very soil brings forth thorns and thistles in place of fruits and grains, because of it. The whole social order is unstable and unsatisfactory through sin. Religion itself is imperfect, perverted often, even a delusion, through sin. And the race of men gropes in a blindness and darkness unspeakably desolate because of sin. The tragedy and pity of it, we understand. The significance of it is told in one sentence from the fifth chapter of Romans: "Sin entered the world and death through sin." All the tears and heartaches, all the fears and anxieties, all the defeats and disasters, all the failures and unfinished works, all the sorrows and sufferings, shames and shadows with which our human family is so intimately acquainted, come through this one dread source—sin. It is the one lesson that youth must learn and will not learn. It is the one tragedy age has never fully laid to heart. Cherished sin banishes from God. "I will not be with them while the accursed thing remains."

#### THE WAY OF RECOVERY

Sin must be confessed. It cannot be hid. Yet man has through all the centuries foolishly believed that he could hide his sin, and has spent his

years in the foolish effort to do so. The very first pair in the Garden, when they had sinned against God, busied themselves making fig leaf aprons, or girdles, to cover the nakedness of their sin-smitten bodies, and hid themselves with their shamed souls behind the trees, from the presence of Jehovah God walking in the Garden. The race has been adept in excuses. We are past masters in subterfuge, camouflage and alibi. But to hide sin is as senseless as to hide a cancer in some vital organ of the body. To hide sin is as hopeless as to hide poison, or ward off its logical results when once it has been taken. To hide sin is a physical and moral impossibility. It cannot be done any more than darkness can be hidden in a world flooded with the light of the sun. Truly did Peter understand the character of that matchless One, whose all-seeing eyes pierced beneath the surface of the unprofitable sea when after the night's vain toil of fishing He said: "Cast thy net again." And when they had cast it they found it full with fish. Truly, I say, did Peter understand Him when he discovered the fact that that all-seeing eye could pierce between the exteriors of his life and see under the cloak of his hypocrisy, so that with undisguised dismay he cried aloud: "Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man!"

A friend of mine sometime ago, speaking in a girls' school, was visited one afternoon by a student who was the daughter of a governor. She

came to him with mingled emotions of dismay and indignation, declaring that her schoolmates or the faculty had told him of her life. Of course that was not true, but his Gospel had laid upon her soul a light in which her willfulness, stubbornness, arrogance, pride and moral inability suddenly stood out clear as the noonday and she saw herself not only as others saw her but as God saw her. When convinced that no human lips had undertaken her exposure, but that she had simply been led through the Word of God herself to face God, she immediately departed from her sin and turned with trembling penitence to her Saviour, that she might be turned from the foul thing she was into the likeness and glory of a child of God.

Unfortunately for us, sin is like typhus germs, always present in the natural man. Its inescapable presence is none the less morally disastrous. The human life in the light of God's revealing presence is like a drop of clear water in the microscope. Therein are revealed all manner of things foul and unclean, so that one is constrained to cry out: "Oh, wretched man that I am." Out of the hearts of men proceed murders, thefts and all manner of uncleanness.

I was preaching in Raleigh, N. C., on a Sunday evening when a stranger whom I had never seen came to me at the close of the evening sermon and demanded to know who had told me of his life. It was easy enough to answer: "I have never

heard of you, but God, who gave the message, knew your nature and has simply exposed you to yourself."

#### SIN MUST BE EXPOSED BY THE SINNER

It is not enough that God should expose the sinner's sin, but he himself must tell it openly and he must tell it without excuse or extenuation, for when the sinner exposes his sin it is as if he brought his severely wounded soul to the Great Physician for healing. "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." My little child came to me with a sore hand. The poor little paddy was throbbing with pain. With tears he cried and besought me to do something for him, saying over and over again, "My hand hurts, my hand hurts." But when I held out my hand for his he cried: "You will hurt." "But I can do nothing for you unless you show me and trust me with it." For a long time he would not, but the pain grew and the necessity for relief grew with it. So after a while, timidly, fearfully, reluctantly, he lifted the poor little maimed member from behind his back, brought it out in front of him, stretched it forth to me and with a certain desperation of need laid it quivering, exposed, upon my hand. He left it there while I opened a terrible knife, and lifted

out of the festering sore the splinter which was the cause of all the trouble, cleansed the sore of its pus, washed it, and bound it up and sent him away healed and on the road to health. So the sinner wounded of sin, a festering sore from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet, must bring his poor wounded heart, his sin-festered life, out and lay it in the hands of God and await the action of that Divine Surgeon. But be this said for our encouragement, that no sinner who has done this, in all the ages past, has failed of a divine ministration of mercy, nor missed the perfect restoration to health.

Even Achan might have been forgiven had he confessed the exceeding sinfulness of his sin. He confessed his deed but not his sin. I suspect that Achan regretted only one thing, and that was that he had been caught. It was the exposure which humiliated him, not the heinous thing of sin itself. It was his shame before man and not his rebellion against God. His very glibness in confession indicates that he took the whole thing lightly. How often has the pastor heard men say: "Oh, yes, I have sinned. It is true. But I am not worse than others. Many there are who do as I have done, or would have done as I have done, had they had the occasion, the opportunity." Doubtless Achan went to his death feeling unjustly treated, therefore he could only die. To the froward God shows Himself froward. Justice is always cruel

to the man who outrages it, and the balances are always false to him who bears false balances in his own life and uses them in his life practice.

There is a story of a governor who went through a prison to select one for pardon. Being a man of discernment, as well as of a merciful spirit, he had his presence announced and listened to the appeal of every criminal within the prison walls. With one exception, they all declared themselves to be innocent of crime and the victims of persecution or of perjury. One there was who came and confessed himself to be justly punished. With shame and humiliation and contrition told of his wayward and lawless life, and expressed himself as unworthy of anything save that which he was receiving as the just result and reward of his sin. To him the governor granted immediate pardon, while all others were sent back to their cells. That was spiritual discernment of the highest order. Confession and repudiation of sin are the *sine qua non* for divine forgiveness. Throw yourself, lost soul, upon the mercy of God! You dare not appear at the throne of His justice! You could not stand before the throne of His glory! You would perish before the throne of His power! But you may come with confidence and gladness to the throne of His mercy if you come as a mendicant, as a moral bankrupt, as a sinner defeated through sin and deserving punishment because of sin. You may come as near to the presence of the Holy God



as the mercy seat itself allows and receive pardoning mercy and help. Delay not your coming! Come with the spirit of the man who said: "I deserve to go to hell; but if I do go, I will go holding on to God's mercy."

#### ONE DIES FOR ALL

There is one other turn to the story without which it would not be complete. It is amazing that God charges not Achan but Israel with sin. It is Israel who suffers defeat. Achan was guilty and bore the punishment of his guilt. But Achan alone was not guilty. He had doubtless done only that which all Israel desired to do. Therefore, when God pronounced sentence upon Achan, He sentenced Israel. Perfectly the Lord Jesus has exposed the fact that desire with a purpose to indulge, is sin. Hate is murder. Lust is adultery. Covetousness is theft and idolatry. We are all smeared with the same pitch. We are all likewise guilty. God has shut up all in sin that He might show mercy upon all. So Achan dies for Israel. There is no escape from sin. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," and if Achan had not died for Israel, all Israel would have been defeated and would ultimately have perished. Of course the analogy is not perfect, because Achan was himself a sinner and could not himself die a substitute for other sinners. He only died as their representative, the scapegoat bearing his own sins,

while he suffered the guilt and defeat of the nation. Ours is a far better estate. We have all been as guilty toward God as was Achan without doubt, but we have a substitute without sin. Sin cannot go unpunished, and we must perish because of sin, or find a substitute who, without sin, is willing to die for our sins according to the Scriptures.

Unlike Achan, our Lord Jesus has no sin of His own. "He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; the punishment of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way and the Lord has laid upon Him the iniquity of us all." He wipes the slate clean for us. He pays our debt to the last penny. When He has finished His redemptive work, when His atoning grace has had its perfect way, there is no more sin problem, there can be no more moral defeat. There is unity with, favor from, and support by the eternal God. Every soul, any soul, may to-day have that inestimable boon, may even now hear the eternal God Himself saying, "I will dwell in you and walk with you. I will be your God and ye shall be my people. Therefore, come ye out and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you and will be unto you a Father and ye shall be unto me sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." "Where-

fore, beloved, seeing we have these exceeding precious promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

This demand of God is as imperative for this day and for the men who live in it, as it was in the day and for the men for whom first written by divine inspiration. There is no substitute for holiness, and no alibi for any one of us from its demands—and its privileges made available in Christ Jesus.

## IX

### COMPROMISE

*"But when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done unto Jericho and to Ai, they also did work wilily, and went and made as if they had been ambassadors, and took old sacks upon their asses, and wineskins, old and rent and bound up; and old shoes and patched upon their feet, and old garments upon them; and all the bread of their provision was dry and was become mouldy. And they went to Joshua unto the camp at Gilgal, and said unto him, and to the men of Israel, We are come from a far country: now therefore make ye a covenant with us. \* \* \* And the men took of their provision, and asked not counsel at the mouth of Jehovah."—JOSHUA 9:3-6, 14.*

**G**OD'S conflict in this world is with sin. Whatever form that conflict takes, whether in the territory of individual life or on the battle-ground of nations, sin is the thing God fights. The purpose of the Holy One in Canaan was a settlement of a holy people in a holy land that He might demonstrate to the world the virtues of theocratic government among men.

The nations who held the land of Canaan were to be driven out on the ground of their wickedness. Their cups of iniquity were full to overflowing. They had forfeited their right to existence. As criminals in the moral realm, they were to be executed. As rebels against the government of God, they must be extirpated. One point not to be

missed is that the land was an elect land as truly as was the nation an elect nation.

In the land Israel was forbidden any alliance, league or covenant with the nations that God devoted to destruction. This prohibition embraced the social, commercial, and religious, as well as the political, life of the people. There must be no federations, no marriages, no interchange of courtesies, nor any contacts that would enable the nations to exert an unwholesome influence over *the nation*. There must be no compromise on the part of Israel with its stern conviction in regard to monotheism, or with the high quality of its loyalty to God, their Governor.

They must recognize that there is always and everywhere a deadly contagion in sin which can only be avoided by a strict quarantine against sinners. All the stern measures attendant upon God's command of separation for His people are measures against death. In all civilized lands the fight against contagious disease is an inexorable one. Eternal vigilance is the price of health. Stern repression and punitive laws must attend a constant campaign of public instruction against sources of infection and contagion. The struggle for correct sanitary laws is an enduring one, the execution of which can never be relaxed. Only eternal vigilance is guarantee of health.

Not less true are these laws in the struggle against sin, and not less morally disastrous is any

relaxation of attitude or rigor of the struggle against sin on the part of those who are called into partnership with God in the moral struggle of the universe.

#### THE STRUGGLE FOR MANSOUL

In this contest God is absolute. Satan's method with man is perfectly simple. He tries by all means to insinuate himself, to gain a point of contact, to win consent of obedience, to gain a place, to establish a precedent and then to exercise the power of entrenched control. The point at issue is always control. The direction of that control is not important. The method of exercising it is not the issue. The point at which men depart from God is not of primary significance. The fact that they do depart, the reality of a surrender of their perfect allegiance, the consent of the soul to do the will of another, is the only thing at which Satan aims and about which he is concerned. If Satan may share anywhere the throne in man's soul with God, he is content. Study again carefully the three temptations of our Lord. Nothing vicious appears anywhere in Satan's proposals. The things he suggests are in themselves legitimate. The evil in them lurks in the shadows where Satan hides his motive. The things that in themselves might have been right became rebellion when done at the instigation of Satan. Consent on man's part to the expediency of any course of ac-

tion suggested by occasion or to any compromise from an absolutely holy life is Satan's victory. The one inescapable universal law of God for the direction of human life is, "I am holy, be ye also holy." Or, "Walk thou before me and be thou perfect." Man must keep unbroken his fellowship with God. He must keep the undisputed government of his life in the hands of God. His hands alone must hold the reins of government of human life. All this is illustrated by the incident of Gibeon.

#### THE GROUNDS OF COMPROMISE

There are certain principles involved in all the compromises God's children have ever made with the world, the flesh or the devil. *They are led thereto by flattery.* Satan subtly keeps in the background and using perfectly irreproachable agents with plausible speech offers honours or confers them. Fine things are said. High character is attributed, sanity and a fine quality of perception and discrimination are proclaimed. Worthiness to occupy a high place, to do a great work, to receive the plaudits of men, is freely acknowledged. Court is paid to the victim of Satan's schemes. He is put forward. He is given preferment. Attention is called to his growing reputation, and a larger reputation is promised in addition to all that it may mean to the flattered servant of the Most High. It is subtly suggested that his own prefer-



ment, enlargement and honours will increase his opportunity for doing good. And the compromise proposed is so nicely covered, so subtly innocent, so invisible to the common eye as to afford small warning of danger or reason for refusal. But the man of God should know the will of God. He has spoken. Then, too, the man of God should be sensitive to spiritual personalities and forces. He should be so keenly alive to moral discriminations and judgments as to discern the presence of evil even when the fruit offered seems to be desirable and is looked upon with pleasure. Remember this, that the one supreme inescapable duty of the godly man is to know and to obey the will of God.

Men are caught in Satan's net *by the offer of advantage*. How often the proposal of quick gain, of easy money, of present riches, seduces the virgin souls of the innocent children of the King. Satan is a past master in the employment of the social bait. He puts the ladder for social climbing in easy reach. He opens the door of office with its attendant rewards of patronage and influence; all the time proposing with each new offer to advantage that as soon as you have taken advantage of this and made yourself secure you may then enter more fully and influentially upon the larger service of God. There was Balaam. He truly answered when first the messengers of Balak approached him: "I cannot go. God forbids it." His first answer, however, must have indicated to

the messengers that deep down in his heart he could not understand the reason for the prohibition and that there was a yearning to possess the gold and the preferment. So when this attitude of the seer was interpreted to Balak, he did the perfectly obvious thing in repeating his offers, doubling his reward and increasing the proposed emolument. Not only Balaam's God, but Balaam's tempter, was cognizant of what was in Balaam's heart. Now when men do not wish to retain God in their knowledge, He gives them up to believe a lie. So when the second offer from Balak came, Balaam is encouraged to go with his messengers. But he goes to his own ruin. He is not permitted to curse Israel, but he is permitted to immesh himself in an orgy of deceit and intrigue which brings the wrath of God upon a sinful people and destroys him in their punishment.

Then there was Wolsey, Prime Minister of England. We can guess the whole tragic story of his downfall as we read the words Shakespeare puts into his mouth: "Oh, Cromwell, Cromwell, had I but served my God with half the zeal I served my king, He would not in mine old age have left me naked to mine enemies."

*Again they are caught by the plausible.* God had said no alliances, but the first bit of mouldy bread and the first plausible story is enough to deceive them and satisfy them in the setting aside of God's will. Did they not see the mould on the

bread? Did not the Gibeonites say thus and so? You would think that Israel was a helpless child, gullible, waiting to be deceived. But the thing all seemed so reasonable. Their actions could be so easily explained. The excuses of mercy. The incorporation of a very generous and liberal spirit in their national policy. The recognition of the claims and rights of their fellows. How pat and patent the glib arguments with which the leaders could explain to the people their departure from the command of God. How gladly the people yielded, how glad they were to respond to the sophistries of this plausible but disobedient leadership. It was so easy to state: "Well, perhaps it was a mistake, but it was an honest mistake." Multitudes of men have died from honest mistakes, but they were just as dead as if the mistake had not been honest. Millions depart from God on plausible excuses, but the end of the way in which they set their feet to follow their rebellious hearts are the ways of death. There was poor Hezekiah displaying the stored-up treasures of Jerusalem, gifts of God, to the greedy eyes of the Babylonian messengers. One imagines he can hear him across the centuries displaying all international courtesy, all diplomacy, all the fine hand, all tact. But he displays God's treasures to greedy eyes to his own undoing and to his irreparable loss. It was small consolation to Israel sitting in captivity by the bitter waters of Babylon after their honest,

well-intentioned king had blundered like any common fool.

Ever and anon the newspapers announce that some company of fair and excellent citizens have eaten at their well-intentioned banquet, properly served, in the midst of the most delightful surroundings and under most auspicious circumstances, toadstools for mushrooms. But doctors and nurses and hospitals and undertakers are called just the same. Physical disasters never outrun the moral, nor are they more real. They only seem to be so. So, indeed, physical disasters of sickness and death are only tangible manifestations of the moral disasters which are their cause and justification.

The only question Israel had to consider was what had God said about the proposed alliance? And your only real concern is: What has God said about the thing you propose to do, the friendship you would make, the partnership you would enter, the marriage you would contract? How does your Bible read? Has not God said: Thus saith the Lord, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers?" And again, "Come ye out from among them and be ye separate and touch not the unclean thing." Anything else is sin, no matter how plausible, no matter what the arguments, excuses, reasonings, may be. God has spoken. That is final as to wisdom and authority. "To obey is

better than sacrifice." Nothing can deliver from the disaster of disobedience.

Do not be caught by the plea against bigotry. Remember the voice of Jacob, though you feel the hairy hands of Esau. "This age is an age of generous impulses, of enlarged sympathies, of broader understandings. The childhood of the race is behind us. The demands of civilization have a right to be heard. Platforms and highways of human thought must be made broad. We must travel in comfort with our neighbours. You cannot crowd men out of the world because you disagree with them. After all we must maintain the freedom of opinion and the right of every man to worship or not to worship God, and to do in his own way what He would do. We must guard ourselves from provincialism. We dare not see with less than a world vision nor think in smaller terms than universal brotherhood." Alas! Obedience to God is at war with all this plausible sophistry. It only has a show of wisdom in will worship. Obedience to God is not bigotry. It is righteousness. The broad road is always the road to hell. Not the least of the dangers attendant upon it lies in the fact that many there are who walk therein. Of course the appeal against bigotry is a threefold appeal. It bears a humanitarian phase. Men, good men, honest, conscientious, outstanding, broad-minded, think differently on the same subjects. They have a right to their opinions and

what we demand for ourselves in freedom of conscience, we must give to others. The way to get together is to work together, they say.

Then there is the appeal of the measures proposed for the enlargement of the work—or the carrying out of the program! Are we not all going one way, aiming for one goal, seeking one achievement? The machinery of our operation is a matter of small concern, we are told. But God has not so demonstrated His wisdom. It would have seemed a slight difference between Moses standing upon a rock to smite it and standing before the rock to speak to it in the name of Jehovah. But the difference was the difference of rebellion and disobedience. And, slight though that difference seemed, it cost Moses his privilege of entrance into the promised land. The difference between putting the Gibeonites to the sword and putting them to perpetual service does not seem to be a great difference. To take away the liberties of a people is surely as bad as to take away their lives. But a dead enemy is never as dangerous as a living slave.

Again, the means employed for the accomplishment of the desired end are held to be a matter of small concern. Indeed, it is often said that the end justifies the means. This has been the plea in every cruel, iniquitous, and intolerable departure from God's appointed means. That was the sophistry in the sale of indulgences. That is the

reasoning of the Jesuit. That is the philosophy of a godless, worldly diplomacy. But all such philosophy is but a vain deceit. God has laid before the feet of men one path straight under the blazing light of truth, no compromising in its direction or in its integrity. And He requires that men shall walk therein.

*Finally they are caught by the appeal of the age.* Demand is made that they be abreast of the times, that they be up-to-date. To accommodate one's self to the new marching orders of youth and the moderns, is held to be heavenly wisdom. To the insistent demands of those who are rapidly forcing their way to the front and demanding to be heard in the councils! These times are not as former times, circumstances have changed. We have outgrown the infancy of thought and conviction. Inventions, devices, travel, culture, have broadened and enlarged us. The knowledge and enlarging horizon of life make demands upon men and we calmly state that the voice of the age must be heard with authority, even against that voice of God which says: "This is the way, walk ye in it." Man must not be peculiar, nor dogmatic, nor insistent upon his convictions. Man has no right to isolate himself from his fellows or hold himself aloof from or superior to any. But, and it were well to give heed to this, there is no page of God's Word which has a single sentence in keeping with this philosophy and its worldly wisdom.



## OUT AND OUT FOR GOD!

How do you stand with God? What leagues have you made with the world? Where is your spiritual power? What is back of your testimony? What has influenced you away from Christ? Where is your prayer life? Once you loved His Word. What has dulled your enthusiasm for it? How do you explain the dimming vision with which you see the things of the kingdom or the dull ears with which you hear the voice of the King? What have you done with that call of God to service which once beat like the insistent call of the drum and fife to the far front of life's battle against sin? Where is your love for God's house and the preaching of His Word? How have you dissipated that fine influence you once exercised for God over other lives? What is it that Jesus Christ is asking you to do? Is it not to put the reins of the government of your life into His hands? In his "Quest for Souls," Dr. Truett gives this apt illustration of the thing I am trying to say to you:

"Dr. Henry Drummond was visiting in a quiet home in the hills of Scotland. When he came to go, his host and hostess said to him: 'We are not going to the station with you'—a journey of three or four miles—'We are going to let you go alone with our driver. He is an unusual scholar. He is a rare gentleman and we are going to leave him

with you. He is in the grip of despair about himself. Maybe you can help him, so we will leave you with him.' Drummond climbed out of the carriage and sat on the seat with the driver. Presently that driver was confessing his weakness and failure, and lapse, and sin, and downfall, and defeat. Drummond said: 'What if I, who drive beside you, were the finest horseman that ever drove a team of horses; what if I could control the wildest span of horses that ever pulled a carriage, no matter how strong, no matter how restive; what if these horses driven by you were such a span, and they rushed around this mountainside and you could not restrain them, you could not control them, you were helpless, and I said to you: "Man, give me the reins and I will control them," what would you do?' The man saw the point in a moment, and turning to his new-found friend, he said: 'Oh, Mr. Drummond, is that what Jesus Christ proposes to do for a man defeated and down? Does He just wish me to give Him the reins of my life?' 'That is it,' said Drummond. 'Let Christ have the reins. Though your sins be as scarlet, He will make them as white as snow. Though your heart and its weakness be poured out like water, He will fortify you with a power which is above men, and you will go your way, clad with a strength which is superhuman.' From that hour that defeated fellow walked in the conscious strength of his Saviour, and a little later was at

the head of one of the chief places of trust and usefulness in all fair Scotland's borders."

Is that not what this table before us here to-day means? Is God not saying to us again: "You cannot worship me on the seventh day unless you walk with me on the six days preceding." Worship on the seventh day not preceded by six days of holy living is not worship, but blasphemy. "Two cannot walk together except they be agreed," so if you count upon God to join you in the conquest of mansoul you must give Him the government of your whole life, and do it without a single reservation. There can be conquest upon no other possible condition.

Bunyan somewhere gives us a peep between the curtains at the contestants. Satan is saying to the Master: "Give me just one inch of the territory of mansoul for my own and you may have the rest." To which the Master makes stern reply: "Not one inch. All is mine and all must be mine." Now, God cannot, He will not, share the throne of your life with any other. You must walk in His way. If you would walk with Him, you must give heed to no voice, however seductive, that would persuade you differently. If you consent to that, then you may hear Him saying again to-day as He has said to His own throughout all the centuries past, "I will dwell in you and walk with you. I will be your God and you shall be my people." And that is the highest, holiest,

happiest of the heavenly privileges that come to men on this earth, and is worth whatever price you may pay for its accomplishment.

No boon in Heaven or earth is more to be desired than the fellowship with God, offered in Christ Jesus. It is not to be purchased; it cannot be earned; it is beyond price. But it may be had upon the simple condition of a life yielded, without reservation, to God. Yield now!

## X

### FLOWING SPRINGS

*"And unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a portion among the children of Judah. \* \* \* And Caleb said, He that smiteth Kirjath-sepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife. And Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife. And it came to pass, when she came unto him, that she moved him to ask of her father a field: and she lighted down from off her ass; and Caleb said unto her, What wouldest thou? And she said, Give me a blessing; for that thou hast set me in the land of the South, give me also springs of water. And he gave her the upper springs and the nether springs."—JOSHUA 15:13, 16-19.*

**H**ERE is a human interest story, full of charm and challenge. Israel is in Canaan. They have obtained a foothold in the Land of Promise. Possibilities of possession lie immediately before them. The rich forests of the hills, the fertile fields and the valleys hold out beckoning hands of winsome invitation. Every path through forest or field is crowded on either side with promise and the prophecy of good. The first fruits of victory have added a buoyant confidence to the spirit of the fighting men and to the courage of the leaders.

It is true that before them there are difficulties, entirely unprecedented difficulties. Walled cities must be pulled down. There is no promise that they shall fall again at the sound of the trumpet. Vineyards and fields, flocks and herds, the homes and the possessions of the inhabitants of the land, will be stoutly defended against the invaders. The land will not be taken without a struggle.

It should be remembered, however, always, that the struggle for Canaan is not alone for Israel, but for Israel's God. He is the man of war who leads on in this warfare of conflict and of conquest. He has certain rewards to make, certain promises to fulfill; among them the promise to Caleb in Deut. 1: 35-6: "Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see the good land, which I swear to give unto your fathers, save Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, he shall see it; and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children; because he hath wholly followed Jehovah."

Here is a perfect illustration and example of a true conception of the inheritance of the saints. Caleb goes to Joshua with a reminder of this ancient promise, and upon that promise claims the right of inheritance. But there is no intimation that Caleb considered the divine deed of gift a reason for moral or even physical passivity upon his part. The deed had been written by the finger of God. His possession had been confirmed by a

divine royal grant, but it is up to Caleb to have the deed recorded and to enter into possession of that of which by divine appointment he is the owner. Here is the very spirit of the thing the Master said to all men in His great invitation, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart and ye shall find rest unto your souls." He gives rest, but His people must find rest. That is, He provides, He guarantees, He secures. They must take, enter upon, appropriate.

So Caleb, claiming by divine inheritance, has his claim recognized by Joshua: "He gave a portion among the children of Judah unto Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, according to the commandment of Jehovah." But immediately it is added, "And Caleb drove out thence the three sons of Anak." But Caleb was a wise leader. He knew that no man liveth or dieth unto himself, and so he immediately sought to enlist others with him in the conquest of his inheritance. There is a choice bit of hill country and a walled city, Kirjath-sepher, and there is a charming young maiden, Achsah, in his home. He offers both as a prize to the man who will take the city and the hill and thereby enable him to attach both a city and a warrior to his retinue. Well, for such a prize as that he did not have to wait long to find a young man. Othniel takes the city and claims the bride. With a



strong man's directness, he proceeds immediately with his bride to take possession of his own hard-won inheritance. With true modesty he claims no more than he had won. But he had won far more than he knew, for the bride he had brought away from Caleb's house was one in a thousand. She knew her father, his ability to give, and his willingness to give. She is now leaving her father's house to give her first allegiance to her warrior husband, and she transfers her first thought from the interest of her father to the interest of her husband. So she moves Othniel to ask a further gift from Caleb, not in payment for service, but as a largess of love. "And it came to pass, when she came unto him, that she moved him (Othniel) to ask of her father a field; and she lighted down from off her ass; and Caleb said unto her, 'What wouldest thou?' And she said, 'Give me a blessing; for that thou hast set me in the land of the south, give me also springs of water.' And he gave her the upper springs and the nether springs."—Joshua 15: 18-19.

So you see this charming young bride not only had a wise head and a loyal heart, but a courageous spirit. She did not even wait for the hesitancy of her husband to entrench itself behind a negative to her suggestion, but she herself, as soon as she could without embarrassment, being her father's daughter, asked for the further gift and obtained it too; as love properly prompted by desire always

obtains for the asking. The story has certain striking lessons.

GOD'S INHERITANCE BELONGS TO THOSE WHO  
WHOLLY FOLLOW THE LORD

Hebron is given to Caleb and Hebron was Abraham's home in that distant day when the father of the faithful, as friend of God, walked through the land and measured it as his own by the promise of a covenant-making, covenant-keeping God. Abraham had had it and made Hebron his stronghold, and now Caleb has it—choicest legacy in all the Promised Land! Memories pile themselves like Pelion upon Ossa in pyramids of impressive reminders. Every new evening under a sky whose fields were filled with scintillating stars, was a new reminder of the seed that should be as the stars of heaven for number. Every new morning with its vision of the surrounding mountains would remind him of the hills to which God's saints ever lift up their eyes, from whence comes their help. Not far away Mount Moriah, mount of sacrifice, would greet his wondering gaze, and Mount Zion rear its royal brow.

Far away to the east, but not too far to challenge the imagination, he might look down upon a distant horizon that should be commensurate with the blue-laved shore of the Mediterranean and pondering over the past hear a divine voice saying to

his friend here in Hebron, "As the sands of the seashore, so shall the multitude of thy children be. Arise, walk through this land, the length of it and the breadth of it, for unto thee will I give it." And Jehovah said unto Abram, lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward, and eastward and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth; so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered."—Gen. 13:14-17. "In that day Jehovah made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates."—Gen. 15:18. Here it is then. All is confirmed by a promise of God. But let it ever be remembered that this inheritance came to the man who wholly followed God. Not to the man who knew most about God, but to him who followed Him wholly. Not to the man who approved God most. The ten spies in that long-ago day bore excellent testimony to the truth of God's word. The cities which they spied out were as God said they were. Fields and vineyards were all there according to specification. They brought no discount upon the fruitage of the land, but nevertheless they brought up a conflicting report. They saw themselves as grasshoppers in the presence and in the sight of the giants that were in the

land. And since God had promised to be with them and to give to them the land of Abram, when they made themselves grasshoppers in the presence of Anak they made God a grasshopper in their own estimation. But Caleb wholly followed God. There was no uncertain note in Caleb's report of a good land, and of a good God whose presence and promise made the inheritance and the possession perfectly sure to a godly people. Multitudes there are, who

"Know the right and approve it, too,  
Condemn the wrong and still the wrong pursue."

Men there are who know about God, who earnestly and heartily approve the Bible, the Church, and Christ Himself as a teacher, as a moral example, as the foremost of the world's citizens, as the finest flower in the garden of humanity, but they permit all this knowledge and approval to make no single difference in their lives. They are drawn upon by the faithfulness of God's Word, and the moral excellence of His character. They see the wisdom and something of the delight of His service, but they do not enter into it. They have never found the will to choose His ways nor commit themselves wholly unto their God. They are "double-minded men, unstable in all their ways."—James 1: 8. Like Jannes and Jambres, they are forever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. As they "withstood

Moses, so do these also withstand the truth; men corrupted in mind, reprobate concerning the faith." My pastoral confidences have brought me scores of instances where men and women have gnawed their hearts out with a hunger for God which might have been satisfied years before by the simple expedient of wholly following God, of making Him their choice, of committing themselves in a definite committal. For the Lord will be found of those who seek Him when they seek Him with their whole heart, and, He is a rewarder of them who diligently seek Him. Indeed He is Himself their exceeding great reward.

#### GOD ESTABLISHES HIS OWN IN A GODLY HERITAGE

Caleb is given a place in the royal tribe. "Seest thou a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men." What more fitting than that a man of royal spirit shall have a royal inheritance? There is a certain grim, though gracious evidence in God's justice. To Abraham, the friend of God, Hebron had belonged. To Caleb, the friend of God, it descends by inheritance rightly. There is an affinity between the man and the place. God gives more than we are able to ask or think. Caleb had no ulterior motive in his loyalty, no thought of self-interest or personal gain moved him to stand with Joshua that day when all Israel would have stoned the two of them with Moses for the testi-

mony they bore. Men take small account of the heroism of that soul wholly committed to God in the midst of a disobedient and gainsaying people. But God is not slack concerning His promise as some men count slackness. Faithful is He who promises, He will also perform. And here is this faithful servant forty years later resting in his Hebron home.

So are we "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ," but with this additional and larger gift that our heirship to the heavenly inheritance is upon no merit of our own. Our Joshua has obtained title for us and confirms us in the inheritance. There are no limitations. "Whatsoever you ask, you shall have." Take what you will in the land of the enemy. Make conquest for the complete satisfaction of your desires. As Ahasuerus gave to Mordecai his ring that the Jews in Sushan and in the provinces of the empire might first defend themselves and then make conquest of their enemies, so God gives to every disciple of His Son the ring, the signet ring of His love. On every page of His revealed truth He is saying to us who are His, "Go in and take what you will. You have the king's grant to a large and royal estate." How often does the Master say to those who approach Him, "According to your faith, be it unto you." And I am thinking if God is ever impatient with His own, it is when their faith puts limitations upon its own demands. "Ask and ye

shall receive." "Quench not the spirit." "Forgetting the things which are behind, press on to the things which are before," and "Looking unto Jesus, run with patience the race which is set before you." I can understand the anger of Elisha against Joash when he smote with his arrows the ground only three times. God was ready to give him complete dominance over Syria, but his timid shrinking made him stop with a temporary check their aggressive wars of conquest.

Every prodigal whose heart turns home knows instinctively, "In my father's house there is enough and to spare." Caleb learned that lesson in faraway Hebron, and it is well worth our while to-day to consider what is included in God's legacy to us.

#### MORAL RECOVERY

First, then, I find that there is in the inheritance of the saints moral recovery—reformation! Now morality is law in action; the practical application of the law in daily life. Sin is lawlessness;—the disregard of law in personal action—hence moral chaos with the attendant disruption of moral forces and the undermining of moral confidence. As Shakespeare so aptly puts it: "'Tis conscience makes cowards of us all." Now, when God takes possession of a man's life, the first apparent result is the reproduction therein of a moral order. There is an immediate cessation of the processes



of moral disintegration and degeneration. There is a reassertion of moral forces and moral order. Thus Caleb came out of Egypt a slave. He came into Hebron a prince. It should be borne in mind, though, that he was not a prince simply by virtue of his place of residence or his legal estate. Pliny, I think it is, writes of Festus, before whom Paul stood as a prisoner, "He administered the office of a prince in the spirit of a slave." With Caleb that whole order is reversed. God puts the spirit of a prince in the life of a slave and fits a man to live in accord with his heavenly inheritance. God does not fill His Heaven with new rich monstrosities or untrained incompetents. All His are "to the manor born." There is a heavenly cognizance of character for all those whose lives bear the marks of divine ownership. Somehow there is a comfortable feeling that Caleb fits Hebron.

#### SOCIAL REHABILITATION

Get that contrast which is drawn—a slave—a prince. Once without standing among men—now the foremost place in a nation. There is no greater social miracle than that of the social recovery of those who have been ostracized by sin or the slavery attendant upon sin, by the simple expedient of conversion to God. Let a man change his relation to God. Let even a sinful world become cognizant of the fact that he has wholly turned to God and his past is blotted out and men forget the manner

of man he was in a willingness to recognize the man he has come to be.

Some years ago one Sunday night when I had preached in an Ohio city, a man came weeping his way down the center aisle of the church to make his confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. He was a great strong-bodied workman who had been broken by drink. The noise of his conversion that night went out through the city like a shock, for everybody had known Will Sylvester. The next morning, before noon, one of the great corporations of the city sent for this man and when he went into the office the manager said: "We have long wanted you in our employment. We have only been deterred from engaging you by your habit of drinking. We have heard what happened in the Park Street Church last night, and the job is open to you this morning if you will take it."

I can well understand the man who attended our service for months and wrote me one day to say: "Every time I come to your church and go away I feel as if I had had a bath." Of course! He knew the significance of that awful arraignment against sin in I Cor. 6:9-10, with the heavenly contrast set forth in verse eleven of the same chapter: "Or know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor re-

vilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you; but ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God." I heard an interesting testimony from a doorkeeper in one of the houses of our God. In a public meeting of The National Bible Institute of New York City, an old man stood up and in his quaint ungrammatical language of the street, with beaming face and a confident, winsome smile, he looked upon us and said: "Aint I a nice looking old man? And just to think I was forty-five years a drunkard and a thief, and last Christmas I had forty neckties given me by those who love the Lord, and love me for Jesus' sake." That was social rehabilitation, upon the basis of moral reformation.

#### SPIRITUAL REGENERATION

But all this would mean nothing if there were not an inner power to sustain those who have been washed. Only a new nature can support a new morality and a new social position. Thus Jesus said, "Except ye be born again, ye cannot enter the kingdom of Heaven." And He said that to Nicodemus, a teacher among the Jews, and a righteous man who feared God. We do as we do because we are as we are. Out of the heart are the issues of life. God has never changed His, "Ye must be born again."

THERE IS A NOBLE DISCONTENT WHICH GOD  
APPROVES AND HONOURS

It was well for Othniel that he had the good sense to listen to his wife's suggestion. It is a naive request she makes of her father. "Thou hast given, give more." The upper springs are not enough. There must be springs for the lowlands too. Inspiration for the high hours. Inspiration for the routine. The vision of the mountain top must be matched by the vision of the valley. From the summit man may see afar the promises of God, but from the valley he must practice the presence of God. There is no need for any of God's people to live on barren land. There are springs for the asking. Having been established in the land, having been given a home and an inheritance among the saints by faith, she immediately asked for an improvement of condition. She was not willing to have her husband just one of the many landholders. He must be the lord of an estate. He must have position and prestige and power, all of which instantly she would share with him. How can any Christian woman be content to have her husband a man who is only a nice man, with a reasonable place and standing among the respectable, the moral, the socially elect, when for the asking she might have him possess all the flowing springs of life and love divine, in his barren land of respectability? Did not the Master say in John 7:37 ff.:

“If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink \* \* \* from within him shall flow rivers of living water.” And John, interpreting, said: “This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believed on him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified.” But He has been glorified now. The Spirit is given indeed and He is given without measure to those who obey the Lord and make themselves willing recipients of his life within. How can any one of you be content to dwell in the barren land of mere morality for yourself or children or friends, when you might have the flowing wells of salvation and the perennial springs of spiritual joy?

THERE SHOULD BE A CONSTANT DISCONTENT WITH  
MERE MORALITY

Contentment with moral righteousness is a dangerous contentment. It is the story repeated of the house swept and garnished which brought not in another master when the old master was cast out. I am always uneasy when I see a young man joining a secret order. He may escape its mark of this world. Most likely he will not. He has here an organization that cannot be a divine organism. He has a ritual and an altar and a burial service; the symbol and semblance of things most desired, but he has no Christ, and without Him he is without hope. Who substitutes the lodge for,

the church does so at his soul's peril. What value can the form of godliness have without its power? "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His."

THERE SHOULD BE ALSO A CONSTANT DISCONTENT  
WITH MERE SOCIAL STANDING

Good social standing is not to be despised. It stands for and symbolizes morality, culture, some knowledge at least, good manners, courtesy, all the charm of social winsomeness. But all that may leave one without entree to the fellowship of the saints. Oh, to know God and Jesus Christ, whom to know is life, eternal life! Through Him alone we have entree into the heavenly family. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in him." "We know that we are of God and the whole world lieth in the evil one, and we know that the Son of God is come and hath given us an understanding that we know him that is true, even his son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life." "My little children, guard yourselves from idols." It was this yearning to know the faithfulness of love that voiced the cry of the Shunamite in Cant. 3:1-4: "I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not. I said, I will rise now, and go about the city, in the streets and in the broad ways, I will seek him whom my soul loveth; I sought him, but found him not. The watchmen that go about the

city found me; to whom I said, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth? It was but a little that I passed from them, when I found him whom my soul loveth; I held him, and would not let him go." It was this which voiced the cry of Mary outside the tomb, a cry verging upon tears: "Tell me where you have laid my Lord." Oh! no life is worth the living if we miss Him!

BE NOT CONTENT WITH SALVATION ONLY.

BE SANCTIFIED

Who wishes to be saved as by fire, to get into Heaven by the skin of the teeth, to slip in at the last hour. The Master has arranged for our sanctification. He has been made unto us wisdom and sanctification and redemption. He has sanctified Himself that we also ourselves might be sanctified. Therefore receive the Holy Spirit. Be filled with the Holy Spirit. Join Joseph in that wondrously beautiful thing said of him by his father in the hour of his dissolution, "Joseph is a fruitful vine, whose branches run over the wall." Not enough to bear fruit within the garden of your own life, nor only to produce the wine of joy to your own household. Live more abundantly, reaching out, running over. Enrich the barren and the bleak outside. I think it well worth quoting the whole remarkable pæan of blessing as they fell from the lips of the aged patriarch: "Joseph is a fruitful bough. A fruitful bough by a fountain;



his branches run over the wall. The archers have sorely grieved him: But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong, by the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob, (From thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel,) Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee, with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that coucheth beneath, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb, The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills; They shall be on the head of Joseph, And on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren." An abundant entrance into God's kingdom!

“Go to the deeps of God's promise;  
Ask freely of Him and receive;  
All good may be had for the asking,  
If seeking, ye truly believe.

Go to the deeps of God's promise,  
And know of His wonderful might;  
Whatever would be a true blessing,  
For Jesus' sake, comes as thy right.

Go to the deeps of God's promise;  
The blessing is never denied;  
He loves, and remembers His children,  
And every good thing is supplied.

Go to the deeps of God's promise,  
And claim whatsoever ye will;  
The blessing of God will not fail thee,  
His word He will surely fulfill.

Go to the deeps of God's promise;  
There's wideness of meaning untold,  
In the promises given His people,  
And the treasures they ever unfold."

## UNCOVER THE SPRINGS OF YOUR SOUL

Remember that to live abundantly is to die triumphantly. Live so as to greet eternity with a shout. Dig out of the mouth of the well of your joy this day all the drifting sand, the gathered rubbish and debris of neglect. Put away the uncleanness of sin and let the flowing spring bring forth its rich, sweet, perennial fountain of delight and of blessing.

## XI

### SOUL'S REFUGE

*"And Jehovah spake unto Joshua, saying, Speak to the children of Israel, saying, Assign you the cities of refuge, whereof I spake unto you by the hand of Moses."—JOSHUA 20:1-2.*

*"Wherein God, being minded to show more abundantly unto the heirs of the promise the immutability of his counsel, interposed with an oath; that by two immutable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have a strong encouragement, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us; which we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and entering into that which is within the veil; whither as a forerunner Jesus entered for us, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."—HEBREWS 6:17-20.*

**G**OD makes provision for the cure and the care of souls. These provisions are made in all their completeness in advance of the need. Indeed, before the souls to be cared for are born, the entire provision for their health is made. I read recently a charming story of a winsome woman of the highest type about to be married who, when building the house which was to be her home, put into it a nursery and a cradle. Here was a fine index of expectation and purpose. A fine indication of the moral sense of the dignity, responsibility and privilege of marriage. A fine realization of holy desire. So God in the

preparation of His world, in the creation of His universe, indicated His expectation that souls would be born into His kingdom, and He makes provision for their coming and for the care of them after they come. His provision is complete and His provisions are within their reach. They are accessible. Welcome and warmth await the coming of every newborn child of the kingdom. Food and shelter, a veritable city of refuge for all who flee to God. All this is wonderfully expressed in the poem:

“O God, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come,  
Our shelter from the stormy blast,  
And our eternal home.

Under the shadow of thy throne,  
Thy saints shall dwell secure,  
Sufficient is thine arm alone,  
And our defense is sure.

Before the hills in order stood,  
Or earth received its frame,  
From everlasting thou art God,  
To endless years the same.

“O God, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come,  
Be thou our guard while life shall last  
And our eternal home.”

This prayer, so beautifully expressed, had its answer before it was uttered. The universal craving which it voices had provision made for its satisfaction before soul-hunger began to gnaw at the vitals of a single human being.

But the efficacy of His promise of provision and salvation are conditioned upon a due regard for man's moral faculties. Man has the power to know, to desire, and to choose the things of God. God will not force him, and so the provision of God in all its far-reaching grace and efficacy, waits upon man's acceptance.

In keeping with this suggestion three simple lessons may be drawn from the Cities of Refuge.

#### PROVISION FOR SALVATION IS MADE IN ADVANCE

Before ever Israel settled in the land of promise, the cities of refuge were provided for:

"And if a man lie not in wait, but God deliver him into his hand; then I will appoint thee a place whither he shall flee."—EXODUS 21:13.

"And Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye pass over Jordan into the land of Canaan, then ye shall appoint you cities to be cities of refuge for you. \* \* \* And the cities which ye shall give shall be for you six cities of refuge. Ye shall give three cities beyond Jordan, and three cities shall ye give in the land of Canaan; they shall be cities of refuge. For the children of Israel, and for the stranger and for the sojourner among them."—NUMBERS 35:9-15.

These six cities of refuge were each within a day's journey of some portion of the territory occupied by the chosen people, so that no man need spend any night with his life in danger. The manslayer, not the murderer, might take refuge in any one of them. And his immunity within the city

was perfect until the congregation brought him to judgment during the lifetime of the high priest then living. If he went forth from beyond the borders of the city of refuge and the avenger of blood found him, he might slay him, because "he should have remained in his city of refuge until the death of the high priest; but after the death of the high priest, the manslayer shall return into the land of his possession."

That is ever God's custom. Provision before the need. It was true in the order of creation. Food was provided before life was created, so that when life came to be, the necessary sustenance might be available. So also salvation, complete and perfect, was provided before sin entered the world.

But God will not violate the moral faculties with which He endows men. He will not force them to choose the way of life. He will not surround them with a wall shutting out sin. He will not require innocence to become purity. But He does provide against sin, its ravages, its penalties, its powers; and whoever among men wills to avail himself of the provision God has made shall find a perfect redemption.

There are those who question the efficacy of a sacrifice for sin made nineteen hundred years ago. But the sacrifice was made before that. Indeed it was written that the lamb was slain before the times eternal. The cross was not an incident of the first century, nor an accident due to man's

bungling, nor a tragedy attendant upon Satan's triumph. The cross of nineteen hundred years ago in its material and visible proportions was simply the bodying forth of the great fundamental, central fact of God's mercy in the provision made from the beginning for atonement. It was in keeping with this great eternal fact that the Lord Jesus said to Peter when He prophesied to him his denial and betrayal on the night of the Lord's passion: "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." Satan had appealed for Simon to sift him as wheat, but anticipating that event the efficacious prayers of the Lord Jesus had prevailed and availed. There are those who teach that this would be to provide a mere license for sin.

But it has not so worked out in human experience. None hate sin so much as those who have found refuge in our Lord Jesus Christ and have appropriated as their own the eternal and gracious provision of God in Him for their salvation. Do you think it probable that one who had slain his fellow-man and had fled to one of the cities of refuge and had been received therein, would have been tempted by the fact that the city was there before his need arose to go out and slay again, and yet again? No, truly. The very fact of the city's presence and its security made imperative requirements that the manslayer should stay within its bounds. It was even so with Peter. Prayed for by his Lord before his denial and betrayal, Peter



goes with swift penitence to cast himself at the feet of the risen Lord when He appears that morning after the fruitless night of fishing on the Sea of Galilee. Peter goes forth forgiven, to feed the sheep and tend the lambs, until at last he paid the penalty of his love and devotion to his Lord in a martyrdom of unspeakable terror; being crucified with his head down. The form of his death was determined by himself since he could not consent, so great was his humility, to die as had his Lord. Hear what he writes:

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy, begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.”—I PETER 1:3-5.

And again:

“Putting away therefore all wickedness, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation; if ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.”—I PETER 2:1-3.

There is no indication within Peter's mind that salvation by free provision of God's grace should, or could, bear a license to sin. Indeed, in powerful language he declares the very opposite to be the constraint of those who love Him. Since we are saved by grace, we must as dear children of the Father put away all uncleanness and every-

thing which defiles, and live worthily of the great name and of the great privileges which are ours in Christ Jesus.

Another has written of this same great theme:

“I saw One hanging on a tree,  
In agony and blood;  
He fixed His languid eyes on me,  
As near His cross I stood.

Sure, never, till my latest breath,  
Can I forget that look;  
It seemed to charge me with His death,  
Though not a word He spoke.

My conscience felt and owned the guilt,  
And plunged me in despair;  
I saw my sins His blood had spilt  
And helped to nail Him there.

Alas! I knew not what I did,  
But now my tears are vain;  
Where shall my trembling soul be hid?  
For I the Lord have slain.

A second look He gave, which said,  
“I freely all forgive;  
This blood is for thy ransom paid,  
I die that thou may'st live.”

O, can it be, upon a tree  
The Saviour died for me?  
My soul is thrilled,  
My heart is filled,  
To think He died for me! ”

None are so grateful, none love in so mighty a compulsion of love, as those who realize their complete redemption by the sheer mercy and grace of God.

## THE REFUGE IS ACCESSIBLE

The six cities were to be distributed so that the manslayer could reach one in a half a day. All he had to do for his own security, after having slain unwittingly his fellow, was to reach the city. All else was dependent upon another. Provision was complete; the city stood with gates open ready to receive the refugee; all the power of the land was arrayed in the defense of his security when once he reached the city gates. Back of the law stood the inviolate and inviolable promise of God. The provision for safety was accessible.

The city could be reached, but since the city could be reached by every manslayer, the city must be reached. Since he may find safety, he must. The city will not go out to meet him. The law will throw no mantle of authority upon him until he reaches the city. No sympathy will be lost upon him. It will be utterly useless for him to stop outside the city and pray for mercy, or ask for time, or seek by any means to mitigate the terrors of his situation. The one inescapable demand for mercy is that he who needs it flee to lay hold upon it. Ah! The responsibility God lays upon man when He provides salvation! Woe to him who loitered by the way! Woe to him who deceived himself into believing that he might wait a more convenient day! Alas! Alas! The multitudes who have gone down to eternal death believing that they

might come when they would. Nowhere in God's Word is it ever said to the sinner, "Whensoever you will." The word is "Whosoever will." But the word which accompanies that open invitation is, "to-day." "To-day if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart." And again, "Boast not yourself of to-morrow, you know not what a day may bring forth." There is the terrible story of Lot's wife who, because she looked back with desire in her heart, perished even as she fled reluctantly with her husband from the doomed city of Sodom. Multitudes have followed her to death when life lay just before them.

A pathetic instance came under my immediate notice some years ago. A family, intimate with my own, found their home one day in the track of a tornado. Long before they had made provision against such possibility. A cyclone cellar had been provided. There was ample room for every member of the family, and safety when once the cellar was reached. Realizing the danger of the swift approach of the tornado on that fatal day, the family ran together toward the cellar. Afterward, however, the mother of the family turned back to pick up some trinket she had laid down on a dresser in her bedroom. Later they found her body there under the debris and ruin of the house! Woe to him, then, who turns back or who for any reason stops short of the city itself!

How great a multitude there are who go so near

to safety and yet will never go in. They satisfy themselves with high ethical ideas and fine moral living. Yet they sink in the midst of a storm of doubts. They die under the blight of tradition. They perish under the pitiless drift of custom. They miss Heaven by an inch, but, they miss Heaven. Oh! my heart burns for these fine, splendid, moral men who never come to Christ, and for these sweet and charming women who never learn Mary's lesson of "the one thing needful." Why not come now, to-day? There is nothing to be gained by delay. There is a risk to be run, the supreme risk of losing eternal life, and missing salvation, and not finding your Saviour. What Augustine said is true still: "Our souls were made for thee, Oh God, and they are restless until they rest in thee." And Moses in Deut. 33:27, "The Eternal God is our refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms." Have you found that refuge? Have you felt the strength and security of those arms? They are outstretched to you at this moment. His hands drip with mercy. His lips overflow with grace as He bids you come. Hear Him say it again with the infinite tenderness and pathos of all the centuries of man's need and yearning: "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

The first time I heard Mr. Moody preach he used this tender story to draw the hearts of the people to the Lord Jesus. Said he: "There was

a little girl ready soon for the other world. The physician came and looked upon her with great pitying eyes, and when he had finished his ministry went out again into the hall of the beautiful home. There the mother joined him and he told her the little girl could not live, perhaps more than a few hours, and the mother went back to undertake to tell the child. She sat down by her and took the wasted little hand in her own and said: 'Bessie, darling, you are going into a beautiful city where there will be great crowds of people and the streets are very beautiful, and all the people are dressed in white. Do you want to go into that heavenly city?' And the little girl said: 'Mamma, I would like to go, but I am so sick and tired, I can't.' The mother tried again, as she choked down her sobs: 'Bessie, darling, directly you are to be where there is a great choir and they will all be clothed in white and they will sing wondrous songs, and Heaven will be full of music and of melody. Don't you want to go and hear the angels sing, and the choir?' And the little girl said again: 'I would like to, mamma, but I am too sick. I am so tired.' And then the mother, with a breaking heart, unable longer to restrain her emotion or express her yearning, gathered the child up into her arms and held her close to her bosom. Then the wasted child said, between her gasps for breath: 'Oh, mamma, that is what I want. I

just want Jesus to take me in His arms and let me rest on His bosom.' ”

“ Well,” said Mr. Moody, “ He is waiting with outstretched arms for you all.”

“ Jesus, my heart's dear refuge,  
Jesus has died for me,  
Firm on the Rock of Ages,  
Ever my trust shall be.

Free from the blight of sorrow,  
Free from my doubts and fears,  
Only a few more trials,  
Only a few more tears.

Safe in the arms of Jesus,  
Safe on His gentle breast,  
There by His love o'ershaded,  
Sweetly my soul shall rest.”

#### WHILE THE HIGH PRIEST LIVED

There were two conditions to this security of the manslayer.

First: The refugee must abide in the city of refuge.

Second: The security there lasted during the life of the high priest, upon condition that he remain within the border of the city. The symbolism here is very, very simple and yet very, very blessed.

#### OUR SALVATION IS LIMITED TO CHRIST

“ There is none other name given under Heaven and among men whereby ye must be saved.”

“ Seeing that in the wisdom of God the world



through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the thing preached to save them that believe \* \* \* we preach Christ crucified."

"If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin."

"There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus."

"And now, my little children, abide in Him; that if He shall be manifested, we may have boldness, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming."

Where else can you find the forgiveness of sins? Where else a conscience void of offense toward God and man? How else than by coming to Him can you obtain the gift of God's Spirit to abide and reside within you? Who else can give you the hope of Heaven and bind again the ties that have been broken? "Lord, Thou hast the words of eternal life. To whom else can we go?"

#### OUR HIGH PRIEST EVER LIVES

The refugee abiding in the city was safe during the life and until the death of the high priest. Let me quote you by blessed analogy Hebrews 6:17-20:

"Wherein God, being minded to show more abundantly unto the heirs of the promise the immutability of His counsel, interposed with an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have a strong encouragement, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the

hope set before us; which we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and entering into that which is within the veil; whither as a forerunner Jesus entered for us, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."

Again in Hebrews 7: 24-25, we are told:

"But he, because he abideth forever, hath his priesthood unchangeable. Wherefore also he is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

What more can He say than to you He hath said: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." "Therefore, he that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." What blessed assurance. What wondrous sense of divine security. Why not come under His sheltering wings this very hour?

Some years ago, on a boat plying between Cincinnati and Louisville, a group of gentlemen, strangers to each other, fell into conversation. While reminiscing, they began to tell personal experiences. One of them, an old Confederate soldier, finally told of a night during the Civil War, when upon sentry duty on a certain battle-field, he had a tremendous sense of depression as if death were very near. He told of his praying, of the tender, anxious thoughts about his home, his loved ones, his wife, his children, and then of the return to instant, urgent, prayer for deliverance. He told, also, how a sense of relief came, so that directly he was relieved of all care and anxiety. As

he finished, another member of that party asked him again the battle and his position on the battle-field. When he had these facts, he finished the story. He said: "On that night, as a sharp-shooter, I had been sent out by my commander to get the sentry on that duty. I had you covered with my rifle for minutes before you began to sing. I could not understand why I could not press the trigger that would send forth the missile of death, but I could not shoot; and then you began to sing: "Jesus, Lover of My Soul," and when you came to that verse:

"Other refuge have I none,  
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee;  
Leave, Oh, leave me not alone,  
Still support and comfort me.  
All my trust on Thee is stayed,  
All my help from Thee I bring;  
Cover my defenceless head,  
With the shadow of Thy wing."

I knew that I could not kill you that night. You were a Christian brother, and though it might mean my own punishment, I lowered my rifle, crept away in the dark, and left you alone."

Then what happened? Fellowship between those two old soldiers! Reminiscences renewed! A sense of God's presence, and praise and thanksgiving, and a gracious testimony for our Lord for all the group.

He is willing to spread His table for you, to

bring you into the banqueting house of His love and shelter you with His care. Souls weary of life, pressed by the pursuing avenger, sin, come away to Jesus to-day.

## XII

### FAMILY FAITH

*"Now therefore fear Jehovah, and serve him in sincerity and truth: \* \* \* And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we will serve Jehovah. And Joshua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you Jehovah, to serve him. And they said, We are witnesses. Now therefore put away the strange gods that are among you, and incline your heart unto Jehovah, the God of Israel. And the people said unto Joshua, Jehovah our God will we serve, and unto his voice will we hearken. So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem."—JOSHUA 24:14, 21-25.*

**P**ERHAPS the most jealously guarded right of man is that of legacy and inheritance. This involves the right to transmit and the right to receive. The right to transmit involves the whole question of individualism versus collectivism. It involves the right to own, to hold, to dispose. Webster says: "An inheritance is that which is or is to be inherited, whether property or physical, mental, family, or racial characteristics; whatever is transmitted by descent or succession." An entail is "anything that is transmitted as an inalienable inheritance; an inherited condition." That is, it is anything which is transmitted to successive holders, denying to them the power to dispose of it by any other means than

natural succession. Thus, property is handed down from father to son through successive generations or from family to family. As in England, titles are entailed, so the property of estates in support of titles, is properly entailed. In America, in some of the States at least, entail is limited. But that is a statutory enactment which perhaps strikes at the root of constitutional privilege. One who has the right to own, and to possess, would clearly seem to have the right to dispose of, not alone temporarily or to one succession, but permanently also. At any rate, the right and power of disposal and entail are well recognized.

Evolution has not established the fact of transmitted characteristics, but all life gives evidence of a transmission of tendencies. In the moral world God established the law of moral inheritance, indeed the law of moral entail. "I, Jehovah, thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing loving-kindness unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments."—Exodus 20:5-6. This, then, becomes a matter of vital importance because every man is a descendant and has, therefore, inherited from his ancestors certain moral responsibilities and punishments or rewards. He is either enriched by or encumbered with the things transmitted from those who have gone before him. Physical features, mental

habits, moral tendencies, all things come to one in the stream of life which flows from generation to generation.

And also because every one is a potential ancestor, what we have received from the past we pass on to the future generations. The child is father to the man. Whether I will or not, my life investments will count for the impoverishment or enrichment of those who come after me, especially those who proceed from me. There is no stopping of the stream of influence. There is no turning aside the results that flow from causes. No man liveth unto himself or dieth unto himself. The law of inheritance holds.

I well realize that in the face of this fearful fact men should be in despair were it not for the fact that grace provides for alienation of moral entail. I realize, of course, also that this is an interference with law. It is a setting aside of nature's verdict. It is turning the polluted stream through the filter of divine mercy. It is the reversal of the curse. But, thank God, there is a surgery which removes abnormalities, supplies deficiencies and even corrects tendencies. This is true not alone in the realm of the physical but also in the realm of the spiritual. There is, therefore, a tremendous challenge in setting a soul toward a goal. There is a line from a poem which declares: "It is the set of the soul that decides the goal." That is true. It has many illustrations. Every loaf of bread has



demanding of the baker the nicest of care when set in the oven. As long as the dough was in plastic state the least tilt of the oven or the pan would have revealed itself in an unshapely loaf when the baking was done. Every concrete surface is a perpetual reminder that the setting has to be done while the substance is plastic. In the same way a family is set towards its ultimate destiny. Thus, there are families that grow stronger and stronger with each generation, and there are those which sensibly deteriorate till they die out in degeneracy.

God illustrates these two principles by the families of David and Jeroboam. Every righteous king of Judah is declared to have walked in the way of David, his father; and of every degenerate and abominable king of Israel it is written: "He made Israel to sin like Jeroboam, the son of Nebat." Let it not be thought that this is an Old Testament principle alone. It has ample illustrations in the New Testament. At Pentecost, Peter voiced the divine promise when he said to the multitudes: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For to you is the promise, and to your children (descendants), and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him."—Acts 2:38-39.

Once more: the case of the Phillipian jailor: "He called for lights, and sprang in, and, trem-

bling for fear, fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house. And they spake the word of the Lord unto him, with all that were in the house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, immediately. And he brought them up into his house, and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, with all his house, having believed in God.”—Acts 16:31-34. Well does our church covenant commit us to “Seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances.” There is, therefore, a tremendous significance in Joshua’s challenge: “Now, therefore, fear Jehovah, and serve him in sincerity and truth; and put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River, and in Egypt; and serve ye Jehovah. And if it seem evil unto you to serve Jehovah, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods that your fathers served that were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah.”—Joshua 24:14-15.

Now in view of the things said above, what are the things one would wish to transmit to his family and through his family to future generations, knowing that the human current like the mountain stream grows in breadth, depth and volume as it moves on to the ocean. What shall we permit to

spring from the fountain of life? For no fountain sends forth sweet water and bitter. No life stream can be both clear and murky.

## TEMPTATIONS

There are temptations to engage one's interests and energies in the projection of a stream of wealth. Many a man is consumed by ambition to transmit to future generations titles of land, and property, and bank accounts, and commercial rating, and influence in economic affairs. Many a family has been known in the marts of trade for conspicuous ability and influence there who have outside the market place no influence on society save the influence reflected from the power of the "almighty dollar." So, also, there are those who aspire to social position, and live with a life ambition to pass on to future generations an assured standing within the circle of the socially elect. It is here they would realize the law of the survival of the fittest. It is upon this inheritance they would center every energy and endeavour. We of the South have known too many sad instances where our men and women, especially women, have preferred to die in genteel poverty rather than to soil their hands with sensible labour lest they lose a certain sense of social caste. All the heartaches and heart burnings, all the struggles and strivings, all the dreams and realizations of life center

around the effort to obtain and maintain a place in the circle of the socially elect or exclusive.

There are those who yield to the temptation to make for themselves and their children a name, a reputation for some great deeds achieved, some great work accomplished, some contribution of service or achievement made to their generation. As if wealth, or social position, or achievement, could be transmitted from one generation to another without the danger of losing value and becoming a liability by virtue of their inherited tendency toward stagnation in the hands of those not responsible for their creation.

#### THESE ARE GREATLY TO BE DESIRED

There are certain things that every man and every family should covet with inordinate desire to have and to hold. Transmitting them would be an inestimable privilege. Foremost among these is

#### FAITH IN GOD

Faith in God manifest in human life is the frame about which the whole life structure is builded. It is like the backbone in the body; like the fibre in the fabric; like the motif in the music; like the foundation for the house. Without it there can be no stable or secure building. Mark Rutherford has been quoted as saying, "Faith is not simply belief in a fact; it is control by a fact." So any adequate faith in God results in the domi-

nance of God in all human affairs. In all the affairs of the personal life of him who exercises such faith and in all the affairs of those institutions with which such a life is connected insofar as the influence of that life is contributed to the institution. Consider the things that grow out of such a faith. All the elemental virtues—hope, courage, purity, purpose, poise, righteousness in human relations—grow out of this faith in God. One needs to consider also that that faith in order to be morally vital must be directed through Christ Jesus. He is made unto us wisdom, redemption and sanctification. His is the atonement which removes every barrier. It is His blood, and His blood alone, that cleanses us from all sin. He bore our sins in His own body upon the cross that we having died to sins might live unto righteousness. It is He who is the propitiation for our sins. His also is the Spirit who supplies every energy, quickening us into a new and a living hope, empowering us, energizing us for every struggle and for every task. Peloubet in his Sunday School notes for 1916, page 186, says: "Our trust does not save us, it makes a way for Christ to save us (Hastings)." In the first place, it shows us our sin, and our need of a Saviour. "Stanley tells us that he found men in Africa who never knew that they were black until they looked upon a white man. So many a man can never know what sin is until he sees it in the presence of Jesus Christ."

(Rev. J. Wilbur Chapman.) In the second place, our trust in Christ enables us to make trial of Him, and He does all the rest."

#### FAITH IN THE REALITY OF A SPIRITUAL LIFE

Upon this reality depends the power to make moral discriminations. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned. Moral judgments depend upon moral character. Therefore, upon the reality of the spiritual life depends moral discriminations in judgment, in social values, in the selection of friends, in the support of causes, in the determination of duty, in the establishing of all personal standards and in self-committal upon all public questions. As the sap in the tree determines the fruit upon its branch, so spiritual life within determines spiritual conduct. There is a certain inalienable consonance between character and conduct, between life and labour. Holiness of relation results in righteousness of conduct. Sin in relation inevitably results in vice in conduct. What irrigation ditches are to the deserts, faith in spiritual realities are to the soul. I would drive it as a barbed arrow into the deepest vitals of your being, that God is, and that He is within reach of all those who diligently seek Him, and that He rewards with abundant outflowings of grace and truth and life all who come unto Him.

There was a time when every geographical map showed the great American desert. It no longer

appears on the new maps. What has become of it? Only this: Our enterprising engineers have turned the waters of mountain lakes and flowing rivers through irrigation ditches into the desert and it has blossomed like the rose. Sand dunes, alkali beds, vast expanses of wilderness and waste without the water, become, with the water, gardens and farms and fields. Here and there in the midst of the unclaimed desert you will find a little farm, a patch of green, set like a gem in the barren wilderness about. What happened? An enterprising settler bored down till he found the water flow beneath, sometimes far beneath the barren surface. He set his windmill and his reservoir in place. He planted his pump and he keeps it working, and thus he brings up from the depths the life which makes his wilderness into a farm and provides sustenance out of the desert. That is the Baracca promise of the Old Testament. Passing through the wilderness they make it a spring. It is thus with the souls of men. Nothing can be so black, or appear so black, or barren, as a life without the realization of God. But once let the soul find God and He has turned all the streams of life like rich flowing fountains; like bubbling, uprising artesian wells; like mighty life-bearing rivers, through his very life.

Oh, to keep alive the conviction that we can get to God, that His resources are available to us in the crises of life. Of all the cries I have ever



heard from a human heart, none has moved me with a more profound pity than that of the woman who came to me in my study, broken and crying out of her disappointed life: "I tell you, God is not able." Oh, but God is able. She found Him to be able when she sought Him with her whole heart and surrendered with a definite surrender the sin which had choked the fountain and turned aside the flow of His grace from her needy soul. Keep alive your faith in the reality of the availability of a spiritual life. Therefore, make the Bible a familiar book in your home. See that it is read often; that it is always revered. Commit it to memory, its precepts and its promises. Give heed to the words of its wisdom, take counsel of its warnings. Find the paths the pioneers of faith have laid and walk in them. Follow the highway of holiness. Encourage your feet to familiarity therein.

Build a family altar. Let it never fall into decay. Keep it vital. Let every member of your household sense the real presence of the living God. I would have you keep alive in your hearts and in your homes a reverence for God's minister. Lay no serious criticism upon his work or upon his person. Leave no trail of slander by his door. Do what you can to convince those that you meet of the integrity of his life and his purpose. Respect his testimony; support his ministry; remember

that he labours for your souls as one whom God commissioned.

## FAITH IN IMMORTALITY

Finally, in order to make big, and broad, and sweet the volume of that stream of life which flows on from the men of one generation to those of the next, I would have for myself and my children a profound, unwavering, faith in immortality. Why do I put immortality in the category of necessary faith? Because my one great enemy for myself and my family is death and the sin from which it springs. There has never been a family circle which remained unbroken by the ravages of this monster. He breaks in upon the infant, the youth, the bride, the lover, the aged. He smites men in the meridian of their powers. I go to the cemetery and look upon the graves, mausoleums and memorials, and ask myself: "Is this all?" If it is, then I am of all men most pitiable. The oil of my hope has already turned into the ashes of my unutterable despair. If the grave is the goal of my life, then it were better to find it quickly. I turn back and look upon my life labours. The inheritance of wealth, possession, or name, that I may transmit to my son with the wish that he may take them as a foundation for his own future building, is kept for his investment and as an incentive to his own noblest endeavours. But if the grave

is the end, if there be no immortality, if there be no bar of judgment in the world to come for the life I shall leave and the life he will leave for the labour I have expended and the labour he will expend, then truly do I cry with that materialist of the Old Testament: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." The wealth I accumulate, the name I make, the influence I create, the enterprises I launch, the institutions I build, the wisdom I find and the possessions which my eyes desire, and my hands acquire, lead me where Solomon found himself as he viewed life from the low level "under the sun." "Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do; and, behold, all was vanity and a striving after the wind, and there was no profit under the sun," if there be no life beyond this one.

Oh, I want an unbroken family circle and I want to see all the family when I get home. Not a vacant chair around the Father's table. I must therefore set my strength Godward. I desire the labour of my hands and the building wrought by my investment of life energies, to endure the shock of death. I pray with Moses: "Let thy work appear unto thy servants, And thy glory upon their children. And let the favour of Jehovah, our God, be upon us; And establish thou the work of our hands upon us; Yes, the work of our hands, establish thou it."—Ps. 90:16-17.

In the assurance of immortality seen by faith afar off, given in answer to that prayer, our souls are encouraged by the divine exhortation: "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not vain in the Lord."—I Cor. 15:58.

"When I hear the scientist declaring that 'nothing is impossible in development of animal structure,' and that the superb singers of the sky have been evolved from some ancient reptile, I fancy myself listening to a naturalistic priest reading the funeral service: 'It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory; it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.' Only this time it is not the funeral service, but the ode of the resurrection, for the resurrection is past already, and in the bird of paradise the body of glory is already before the celebrant's eyes. We do not set this argument forth as a demonstration of the resurrection of the body; it does, however, entitle us to ask, 'Why is it judged incredible with you, if God doth raise the dead? If He can effect these marvellous transformations in the brute world, surely He can conserve and perfect in a manner yet more wonderful the bodily and spiritual life of His elect and redeemed.'" (Quoted in Tarbell's *Sunday School Notes, 1912*, from *A Fatal Barter* by Dr. W. L. Watkinson.)

The same thought is put in poetic form by Eva Horton:

“The heart of the clod is stirring  
With impulse blind for room;  
The sun’s soft voice is wooing it;  
The wind’s warm breath is suing it—  
‘Wake, little clod, to beauty;  
Stir, tiny seed, to duty;  
Rise to life, to bloom.’

Thou soul of mine, art groping  
Thy heavenward path to prove?  
Hark to the great Heart wooing thee,  
List to the great Voice suing thee—  
‘Wake thou, my own, to beauty;  
Rise, thou redeemed, to duty;  
Rise to life, to love.’”

That is why I yearn for my people, my children, to look for the coming of the Lord Jesus. Immortality hinges upon His return. It is His voice, at His coming again, that will call the dead out of their graves; that will quicken the corruptible into incorruption and clothe the mortal with immortality. Let that hope of His return, then, never grow dim. God grant us wisdom to invest life for eternity and to live now daily, worthy of eternity. Hope lies before us. Tasks are all about us. Temptations with seductive voice allure us. God hold us steadfast for ourselves and our families, to the heavenly vision, in obedience to the heavenly voice.

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